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**Defending Happiness:
Jonathan Edwards's Enduring Pursuit of a Reformed Teleology
of Happiness**

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The University of Edinburgh

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis has been composed entirely by me, that the research and writing is my own, and that it has not been submitted for any other degree.

James H. Thomforde

June 2018

Abstract

This thesis examines the doctrine of happiness within the Jonathan Edwards corpus and seeks to understand its function and significance as it relates to Edwards's broader theological project. A close examination of both the internal development and the Early Modern intellectual context of Edwards's thought reveals that spiritual happiness is of central importance to Edwards's "end of creation" project. Scholars commonly assume that the burden of Edwards's teleological writings is a theocentric defense and promotion of the glory of God in the face of an increasingly anthropocentric Enlightenment. However, this study demonstrates that, notwithstanding Edwards's adherence to the Reformed tradition's high view of God's glory, the early and enduring concern of Edwards's teleological project is the proof and defense of spiritual happiness as ultimate *telos* from a Reformed perspective.

Edwards's purpose to defend the teleological status of happiness is primarily exposed by the development of Edwards's teleology in his *Miscellanies* notebook and related theological treatises such as *Discourse on the Trinity* and *End of Creation*, especially as Edwards engages rival teleological visions that tend to subordinate happiness. While Edwards's teleological conviction regarding happiness is inspired by his own Puritan and Reformed heritage and his early profound religious experience, he subsequently pursues the proof and defense of his Reformed teleology of happiness in response to the increasing tendency of Reformed and non-Calvinist Enlightenment thinkers to subordinate the teleological status of happiness. During the Early Modern period, Reformed theologians frequently subordinate happiness relative to godliness, and especially the glory of God, and Enlightenment thinkers increasingly make practical virtue and usefulness toward the common good the ultimate *telos* of human existence at the expense of spiritual happiness, which intellectual trends Edwards engages for the sake of defending his Reformed teleology of happiness.

The first stage of the development of Edwards's teleology of happiness is marked by his conversion and subsequent profound experiences of spiritual happiness, and by his efforts that follow during the early 1720s to prove happiness as ultimate *telos*, primarily on the basis of Edwards's doctrine of divine goodness. During the second stage of development, Edwards works to defend happiness as ultimate *telos* from a comprehensively biblical and Reformed perspective. Edwards spends the rest of his career developing his doctrines of God and the Trinity, the work of redemption, and the glory of God primarily for the sake of defending his Reformed teleology of happiness, which I suggest, significantly influences and shapes Edwards's theology.

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Abbreviations

- WJE 1 Edwards, Jonathan. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 1: Freedom of the Will*, edited by Paul Ramsey.
- WJE 2 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 2: Religious Affections*, edited by John E. Smith.
- WJE 3 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 3: Original Sin*, edited by Clyde A. Holbrook.
- WJE 4 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 4: The Great Awakening*, edited by C. C. Goen.
- WJE 5 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 5: Apocalyptic Writings*, edited by Stephen J. Stein.
- WJE 6 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 6: Scientific and Philosophical Writings*, edited by Wallace E. Anderson.
- WJE 8 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 8: Ethical Writings*, edited by Paul Ramsey.
- WJE 9 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 9: A History of the Work of Redemption*, edited by John F. Wilson.
- WJE 10 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 10: Sermons and Discourses, 1720-1723*, edited by Wilson H. Kimnach.
- WJE 13 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 13: The "Miscellanies," a-500*, edited by Thomas A. Schafer.
- WJE 14 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 14: Sermons and Discourses, 1723-1729*, edited by Kenneth P. Minkema.
- WJE 15 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 15: Notes on Scripture*, edited by Stephen J. Stein.
- WJE 16 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 16: Letters and Personal Writings*, edited by George S. Claghorn.
- WJE 17 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 17: Sermons and*

Discourses, 1730-1733, edited by Mark Valeri.

WJE 18 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 18: The "Miscellanies" 501-832*, edited by Ava Chamberlain.

WJE 19 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 19: Sermons and Discourses, 1734-1738*, edited by M. X. Lesser.

WJE 20 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 20: The "Miscellanies," 833-1152*, edited by Amy Plantinga Pauw.

WJE 21 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 21: Writings on the Trinity, Grace, and Faith*, edited by Sang Hyun Lee.

WJE 22 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 22: Sermons and Discourses, 1739-1742*, edited by Harry S. Stout and Nathan O. Hatch.

WJE 23 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 23: The "Miscellanies," 1153- 1360*, edited by Douglas A. Sweeney.

WJE 24 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 24: The "Blank Bible,"* edited by Stephen J. Stein. 2 vols.

WJE 25 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 25: Sermons and Discourses, 1743-1758*, edited by Wilson H. Kimnach.

WJE 26 _____. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Volume 26: Catalogues of Books*, edited by Peter J. Theusen.

PRRD1 Muller, Richard A. *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: Volume One: Prolegomena to Theology*.

PRRD3 _____. *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy ca. 1520 to ca. 1725. Volume Three: The Divine Essence and Attributes*.

PRRD4 _____. *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy ca. 1520 to ca. 1725. Volume Four: The Triunity of God*.

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Introduction

1. The Focus of this Study

Happiness is a subject that fills the pages of the Jonathan Edwards corpus. Whether in his private notebook entries, theological treatises, sermons, or records of religious experience, Edwards may be observed expending intense intellectual effort explaining the concept of happiness as it relates to Christian theology. Throughout his entire career, the concern to comprehend and articulate happiness, especially within a Christian teleological framework, is pervasive. Yet, the topic of Edwardsian happiness has received only peripheral scholarly attention, the subject of not one dedicated treatment.¹ The question, therefore, that remains unanswered amidst the extensive commentary on Edwards's thought, and that initially motivated my research, is: Why does happiness seem to be so important, even central, to Edwards's theological project?

The internal textual and historical research pursued for the sake of answering the above question has resulted in the following thesis: Edwards spent his entire career working to prove and defend a teleology of happiness within a Reformed theological framework. That is, Edwards, who at the beginning of his career became convinced of the high teleological status of happiness through philosophical and theological reasoning as well as his

¹ Extensive treatments of Edwards's theology offer very little dedicated attention to happiness. Michael McClymond and Gerald McDermott's massive *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards* treats the subject of happiness briefly under the subheading, "Enjoyment," one of the three aspects of "Edwards's Spirituality." Michael J. McClymond and Gerald R. McDermott, *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 68- 74. Oliver Crisp's recent *Jonathan Edwards on God and Creation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012) and Steven M. Studebaker and Robert W. Caldwell III's *The Trinitarian Theology of Jonathan Edwards: Text, Context, and Application* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2012) offer scant analysis of Edwardsian happiness. Kyle Strobel's recent *Jonathan Edwards's Theology* represents an exception, suggesting the "beatific personal-delight" of Edwards's Trinity as central to his theological project. Kyle C. Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology: A Reinterpretation* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 70-71.

religious experience, spends the rest of his days pursuing a Reformed and orthodox articulation of this teleology, which he develops, primarily in his *Miscellanies* notebook, *Discourse on the Trinity*, and *Concerning the End for Which God Created the World* (hereafter referred to as *End of Creation*), in response to rival teleological claims that emerge from within Enlightenment philosophy and Reformed theology during the Early Modern period.

Edwards's focus on happiness is certainly not unrelated to Early Modern intellectual trends, yet Enlightenment philosophy appears to have less of an influence on Edwards's conceptual framework than scholars assume. The centrality of happiness in Edwards's thought derives more from his personal religious experience and his own Puritan and Reformed heritage than any Enlightenment agenda. Gerald McDermott claims that Edwards's teleology of happiness represents an accommodation to Enlightenment values, especially the "obsession with human happiness,"² however my research reveals that the fundamentals of Edwards's teleology of happiness derive primarily from his own theological tradition.³ In fact, Edwards's commitment to defend the teleological status of happiness appears to represent a *counter*-Enlightenment stance, which challenges the traditional view that Edwards's *counter*-Enlightenment agenda is a radically theocentric apologetic that exalts the glory of God against an excessively humanistic Enlightenment obsessed with human happiness.

2. The Scholarship

² "In 1724 Edwards co-opted the Enlightenment obsession with human happiness to argue for the disinterested virtue of the deity. In *Misc.* 104 he asserts that God created the world to make human beings happy..." Gerald R. McDermott, *Jonathan Edwards Confronts the Gods: Christian Theology, Enlightenment Religion, and Non-Christian Faiths* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 90.

³ S. Bryn Roberts has demonstrated the centrality of happiness in Puritan divinity in his recent *Puritanism and the Pursuit of Happiness: The Ministry and Theology of Ralph Venning c. 1621-1674* (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2015). Randy Alcorn's recent *Happiness* exposes hundreds of Puritan and Reformed texts on happiness in order to highlight that tradition's high view of that theme. Randy Alcorn, *Happiness* (Carol Stream: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015).

While most scholars perceive Edwards's efforts to demonstrate happiness as ultimate *telos* as a "surprising" and brief initial stage of his thought,⁴ I aim to show that Edwards's efforts to defend the thesis, "happiness is the end of creation," represents an enduring purpose. The opinion of Norman Fiering, and Perry Miller, regarding the staying power of Edwards's early convictions is, therefore, precisely fitting,⁵ and John Bombaro is keen to observe, "'Happiness' itself, as the end of creation, appears as an early, frequent, and enduring theme in his thought."⁶ However, the vast majority of interpretations of Edwards's teleological development have failed to appreciate the enduring nature of Edwards's early articulation of his teleological vision. One reason that scholars tend to overlook the lasting significance of happiness as the ultimate concern of Edwards's teleology is, perhaps, the persistent influence of the traditional view that the "glory of God" represents the center of Edwards's worldview, and that the defense of this doctrine and its teleological import represents the primary motivation and purpose of Edwards's project. This tendency originates with Edwards's reputation as a defender of a rigorously theocentric Calvinism, the tradition for which the glory of God is often claimed as its "central dogma."⁷

Edwards's steadfast engagement with Enlightenment thought as an apologist for the Reformed tradition remains to this day one of his most enduring

⁴ McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 11, 213; Walter J. Schultz, "Jonathan Edwards' End of Creation and Spinoza's Conundrum," *Jonathan Edwards Studies* vol. 2, no. 2 (2012): 32.

⁵ "The entire body of Jonathan Edwards's thought has a notable consistency. Ideas sketched out in the 1720s were given full treatment thirty years later with relatively little change in substance." Norman Fiering, *Jonathan Edwards's Moral Thought And Its British Context* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2006), 105; Perry Miller, *Jonathan Edwards* (First Nebraska, 2005, first published by William Sloan Associates, Inc., 1949), 44-45.

⁶ John J. Bombaro, *Jonathan Edwards's Vision of Reality: The Relationship of God to the World, Redemption History, and the Reprobate* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2012), 134.

⁷ Charles Partee, "The Phylogeny of Calvin's Progeny: A Prolusion," in *Evangelical Calvinism: Essays Resourcing the Continuing Reformation of the Church*, eds. Myk Habits and Bobby Grow (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2012), 59.

reputations. George Marsden describes Edwards as “intensely ambitious” in precisely this direction, and Oliver Crisp claims that Edwards’s theology is inherently apologetic for the sake of the Reformed tradition.⁸ Notwithstanding the reasonableness of Edwards’s defense, his apologetic is often characterized as a “dogged promotion of Calvinist doctrine,”⁹ a polemical battle between his steadfastly theocentric Calvinism and an increasingly anthropocentric Enlightenment. Scholars are adamant to interpret Edwards’s Reformed apologetic as radically theocentric, as with McClymond and McDermott: “Edwards opposed the deists with all the energy of his being. While they sought to distance God from the world, he upheld a radically God-centered perspective.”¹⁰ Perry Miller’s *Jonathan Edwards* is illustrative in this regard. Describing Edwards’s famous 1731 trip to lecture in Boston, where “free and catholic” Enlightenment religion threatened the Puritan orthodoxy of his late grandfather Solomon Stoddard, Miller writes:

If he was to hold together the provinces his grandfather had conquered, it was against these minions of the Enlightenment he must fight...if the faith of the Valley and of primitive New England was to be vindicated, then the Harvard of Leverett and Wigglesworth and of the platitudinous Wadsworth – which was the American outpost of “the prodigious prevalency of infidelity and heresy in this nation at this day” – had to be told that God can be glorified by, and only by, man’s absolute dependence upon Him.¹¹

The sermon delivered by Edwards that day, *God Glorified in the Work of Redemption*, is taken by Miller to be paradigmatic of a ministry career aimed at exalting the glory of God over and against the radical humanism of the “minions of the Enlightenment,” which interpretation persists in the recent literature, as

⁸ George M. Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 110; Oliver D. Crisp, *Jonathan Edwards Among the Theologians* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2015), xviii.

⁹ Mark Valeri, “Jonathan Edwards, the New Divinity, and Cosmopolitan Calvinism,” in *After Jonathan Edwards: The Courses of the New England Theology*, eds. Oliver D. Crisp and Douglas A. Sweeney (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 17.

¹⁰ McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 153.

¹¹ Miller, *Jonathan Edwards*, 23.

McClymond writes, “Edwards’s theocentrism represents a turning of the tables on Enlightenment anthropocentrism.”¹²

The literature that has stressed Edwards’s reputation and role as a polemical defender of Calvinism has followed Miller in emphasizing Edwards’s apology for that tradition’s reputedly preeminent doctrine, the glory of God. Mark Noll calls the glory of God “the unifying center of Edwards’s theology.”¹³ This doctrine likewise dominates Bombaro’s recent interpretation. Redemption, he writes, is about the divine glory, and not “primarily about human beings”:

...it is mostly about God....all of God’s dealings with humanity revolve around “the end of creation,” which is God’s self-glorification through self-communication. This idea lies at the heart of Edwards’s theocentric worldview. Thus, for him, the history of the world is the narrative of divine glorification.¹⁴

“Jonathan Edwards is remembered for many reasons,” writes Brandon Crawford, “but above all he must be remembered as a theologian obsessed with God’s glory in Christ,”¹⁵ and Noll writes, of Edwards’s overall motivation and purpose: “To communicate this divine glory became the burden of his life as a pastor and theologian.”¹⁶

The argument for the centrality of God’s glory in Edwards’s thought is communicated nowhere more forcefully than in the readings of his career long effort to articulate his teleological vision that culminates in his dissertation, *End*

¹² Michael J. McClymond, *Encounters with God: An Approach to the Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Oxford, 1998), 31, 29.

¹³ Mark Noll, *America’s God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 23.

¹⁴ Bombaro, *Jonathan Edwards’s Vision of Reality*, 3.

¹⁵ Brandon James Crawford, *Jonathan Edwards on the Atonement: Understanding the Legacy of America’s Greatest Theologian* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2017), 74.

¹⁶ Noll, *America’s God*, 23. Readings of Edwards that emphasise the *sovereignty of God* as the central concern of Edwards’s ‘theocentric’ theology and apologetic contribute similarly to the historiography that tends to ignore Edwards’s happiness agenda. Marsden writes: “The central principle in Edwards’ thought, true to his Calvinistic heritage, was the sovereignty of God.” Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 4; See also, Crisp, *Jonathan Edwards Among the Theologians*, xviii; Avihu Zakai, *Jonathan Edwards’s Philosophy of History: The Reenchantment of the World in the Age of Enlightenment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 25.

of *Creation*. McClymond claims that this essay is “chiefly devoted to showing that the world exists for the glory of God.”¹⁷ To be clear, my thesis does not deny that the glory of God is central to Edwards’s Reformed theology. Rather, it intends to challenge the consensus view that the promotion of the divine glory is the overarching *purpose* of Edwards’s project, as with Strobel, who describes “the main thrust of Edwards’s proposal”:

God created the world for his own glory and in doing so created creatures as reciprocal personal agents to receive his glory and remanate it back to him....In short, Edwards argues that God is the weightiest and most excellent of beings, existing without potential and having the greatest regard for himself....God, in his eternal fullness, willed to create for his own glory.¹⁸

Likewise, Marsden comments, “The heart of Edwards’ exposition was his analysis of the many Scriptural references that the highest end of creation is “the glory of God.”¹⁹ In step with these readings that emphasize the teleological import of the divine glory, Stephen Stein writes, “The *End of Creation* asserted and reinforced the centrality of God and the communication of God’s glory as the highest purpose informing the creation of the universe.”²⁰ Thus, the opinion of most scholars is that the primary theme and purpose of Edwards’s “end of creation” project is the supremacy and promotion of “the glory of God.”

In fact, *End of Creation* is commonly characterized as a polemic targeted against those “minions of the Enlightenment” who find Calvinistic theocentrism untenable and are bent on exalting the *happiness* of the creature. McClymond and McDermott describe the dissertation as “a slap in the face for Enlightenment humanists who held that human beings should seek their own happiness and that God’s great aim was to promote his creature’s well being.”²¹ Likewise, Marsden describes the essay as a response to “Eighteenth-century moral

¹⁷ McClymond, *Encounters with God*, 29.

¹⁸ Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards’s Theology*, 76-77.

¹⁹ Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 462.

²⁰ Stephen J. Stein, “Introduction,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Stephen J. Stein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3.

²¹ McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 166.

philosophers and moral popularizers,” who “were increasingly speaking of the deity as a benevolent governor whose ultimate interest must be to maximize human happiness.”²² Marsden and most commentators do ascertain the achievement of the essay to reconcile high views of both happiness and divine glory, however, they tend to assume that the *purpose* of Edwards’s great achievement is to rescue, or preserve, the place of *God’s glory* in the Enlightenment theological discourse. The interpretation of Edwards’s purpose to communicate the primacy of the divine glory at the expense of human happiness is represented by Noll’s view:

Against the exaltation of human happiness as the central concern of life, he argued in the first dissertation, “All that is ever spoken of in the Scripture as an ultimate end of God’s works is included in that one phrase, ‘the glory of God.’”²³

Similarly, E. Brooks Holifield argues that Edwards intentionally subordinates human happiness relative to the manifestation of the “excellency” of God²⁴:

God created the world so that this divine excellency could be expressed, known, and admired....The happiness of the creation was an appropriate secondary aim of God’s creative activity...²⁵

“The ultimate end of creation was not human happiness,” writes Holifield, “but the diffusion of God’s “excellent fullness” for its own sake.” Therefore, Edwards’s intense concern to preserve and promote the supremacy of the glory of God is that which dominates the interpretation of Edwards’s preeminent theological project. That it was Edwards’s primary goal to defend the glory of God as the central and ultimate teleological reality of the universe in the face of an anthropocentric Enlightenment that despised Calvinism and imagined human

²² Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 463.

²³ Noll, *America’s God*, 24.

²⁴ The manifestation of the “excellency” of God is synonymous with the *ad extra* “glory” of God in the Reformed tradition. See Muller, *PRRD3*, 545.

²⁵ E. Brooks Holifield, “Edwards as Theologian,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Stephen J. Stein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 149.

happiness as ultimate *telos* is therefore, a historiographical tradition that has persisted for decades.

This reading of Edwards as a “radically” theocentric thinker bent on emphasizing the centrality of the glory of God has tended to obscure the perspective on Edwards’s “end of creation” project that my thesis suggests, that a primary and enduring purpose of Edwards’s teleological project is to defend *human happiness* as ultimate *telos*. This is not to say that Edwards was a radical humanist who departed from the Reformed tradition and its treasured teleological conviction about God’s glory. Nor is it to deny the theocentric character of Edwards’s theology. However, I will argue that a primary motivation and purpose of Edwards’s theological project is to defend the notion that *spiritual happiness* is the ultimate “end of the creation.” The consensus interpretation is that Edwards’s project is motivated by an apologetic concern to defend the glory of God against an anthropocentric Enlightenment. However, my thesis suggests that Edwards’s primary concern is first to prove, and then defend within a Reformed theological framework, the teleological view that “happiness is the end of the creation.”

3. The Intellectual Context

While my thesis draws primarily from Edwards’s primary sources, there are two underappreciated aspects of Edwards’s intellectual context that make his defense of happiness plausible. While it is true that during the eighteenth century, “the pursuit of happiness was one of the principal quests of enlightened people,”²⁶ there were nonetheless strong tendencies within both moral philosophy and Reformed theology that revealed a proclivity to subordinate, and in some cases even ban, happiness from the teleological discussion.

In terms of Edwards’s own Reformed tradition, it is evident that Edwards perceived the strong tendency to subordinate human happiness relative to the

²⁶ Caroline Winterer, *American Enlightenments: Pursuing Happiness in the Age of Reason* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 3.

divine glory in the teleological scheme, which E. Brooks Holifield describes thus: “Calvinists spoke often of happiness as one of the ends of creation, but they subordinated it to the supreme end of God’s glory.”²⁷ Notwithstanding the efforts of the seventeenth century Westminster Assembly to stress the teleological significance of happiness alongside the glory of God as “the chief and highest end of man,”²⁸ ‘enjoying God’ continues to be articulated in a dichotomous and subsidiary fashion relative to the glory of God, as expositions of the *Westminster Catechism* reveal.²⁹ Scholars have characterized Edwards’s project as an attempt to solve the philosophical problem of dichotomy through his “end of creation” project, but they have largely missed Edwards’s agenda to rescue happiness from subordination relative to the glory of God within the Reformed context. Therefore, the existence of and, as I will show, Edwards’s explicit awareness of, this tendency within the Reformed tradition to subordinate happiness in the teleological scheme makes it eminently plausible that Edwards is motivated to defend happiness against this subordinate status.

Secondly, the early *Miscellanies* reveal Edwards’s awareness of the Enlightenment notion that human virtue in the form of practical benevolence or usefulness toward the common good is the ultimate purpose of human existence. This rival teleological vision, which motivates Edwards’s initial teleological proof, surfaces not only within moral philosophical discussions, but also influences the traditional religious conversation of both Latitudinarian and Puritan divines. Charles Taylor bears witness to this Early Modern view, arguing that “a central feature of Enlightenment morality” is the “stress on practical

²⁷ E. Brooks Holifield, *Theology in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 88.

²⁸ Question 1 of the *Westminster Larger Catechism* (1647): “What is the chief and highest end of man?” Answer: “Man’s chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy him forever.” “Westminster Larger Catechism,” *The Westminster Confessions of Faith and Catechisms* (Lawrenceville: Christian Education & Publications, 2007), 153.

²⁹ Three such expositions, authored by Thomas Watson, Thomas Ridgley, and Samuel Willard, will be examined in subsequent chapters of this dissertation.

benevolence,” which, “the Enlightenment took...up in intensified form...”³⁰

Emphasizing the influence of John Locke, whom Edwards studies during his early years, Taylor claims that one of Locke’s most influential ideas is the notion that “usefulness” toward the public good is the sum of God’s design for the universe; in Taylor’s words: “the proper end of intellectual rationality is usefulness to our life’s purposes.”³¹

In the new vision, which Locke helped to prepare, the goodness and the providence of God are shown above all in designing the world for the preservation of its denizens, and particularly so that the various parts of it conduce to reciprocal conservation...a vast interlocking order of beings, mutually subserving each other’s flourishing...³²

This is precisely the idea that Edwards rejects in early 1723 in *Misc. tt*, which leads him subsequently, to declare his teleology of spiritual happiness in *Misc. 3*, “Happiness is the end of the Creation.”³³ Mark Valeri describes the Enlightenment similarly to Taylor, as having come to “fasten on benevolence as the definitive virtue,” and promote “the belief that God designed the cosmos to reveal and enforce the virtues of benevolence.”³⁴ Richard Cumberland’s influential *De Legibus Naturae* (1672) also promotes this view. Rejecting the idea that “one’s own happiness is or ought to be one’s supreme end,”³⁵ Cumberland writes, “The common good is the best and greatest end, which rational beings can propose to themselves.”³⁶ In fact, the radical devaluation of spiritual happiness relative to practical virtue is inherent to what Taylor claims to be “one of the major organizing ideas of the Enlightenment,” a strictly practical,

³⁰ Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 84-5.

³¹ *Ibid*, 243.

³² *Ibid*, 244.

³³ “It has been said that there may be too much of devotion, and this reason has been given for it: that one man was made to be *useful* to the rest of the universe, was made for *the common good* of the whole frame...” Edwards, *Misc. tt*, *WJE* 13, 189.

³⁴ Valeri, “Jonathan Edwards, the New Divinity, and Cosmopolitan Calvinism,” 26.

³⁵ Terence Irwin, *The Development of Ethics: A Historical and Critical Study, Volume II: From Suarez to Rousseau* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 224.

³⁶ Cumberland, quoted by Stephen Darwall, *The British Moralists and the Internal ‘Ought’: 1640-1740* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 102.

“instrumental rationality,” which he argues, marks a departure from the traditional notion that the “highest expression of reason was contemplation – in the beatific vision.”³⁷ Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that Edwards perceives this rival Enlightenment vision that threatens to subordinate, not the *glory* of God, but “beatific” *happiness* in God.

It is also likely that Edwards perceives this subordination of spiritual happiness in Latitudinarian, and even Puritan, circles. J.B. Schneewind observes the emergence of a “law-based” teleological vision during Edwards’s day,³⁸ as does Mark Noll, who argues that this ‘legal’ worldview tends to devalue happiness within the economy of God’s ultimate purposes in Colonial America, writing:

Believers and nonbelievers alike were enjoined to follow God’s law, but the leading theologians described law-keeping more as a reflection of divine glory than a path to human happiness.³⁹

Noll’s claim highlights the exaltation of divine glory over human happiness, but also the subordination of happiness to godly obedience. William Ames’s eminently influential *Marrow of Theology*, which Edwards memorized during his time at Yale, is a prime example of the preference for practical righteousness (and God’s glory) over personal happiness:

What chiefly and finally ought to be striven for is not happiness which has to do with our own pleasure, but goodness which looks to God’s glory. For this reason, theology is better defined as that good life whereby we live to God than as that happy life whereby we live to ourselves.⁴⁰

Ames’s conviction is that the chief and final end of human living is goodness, or “godliness,”⁴¹ rather than medieval notions of divine contemplation and

³⁷ Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 243, 247.

³⁸ J.B. Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy: A History of Modern Moral Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 286.

³⁹ Noll, *America’s God*, 28.

⁴⁰ William Ames, *The Marrow of Theology*, ed. John Dykstra Eusden (Durham, NC: The Labyrinth Press, 1983), 78.

⁴¹ Ames, *Marrow*, 78.

happiness. Norman Fiering observes, “The practical theologians” like Ames “condemned the belief that happiness is the ultimate aim of man and especially opposed the notion that contemplation is the proper end of human endeavor.”⁴² “All disciplines,” writes Ames, “have *eupraxia*, good practice, as their end.”⁴³ Boston’s eminent divine, Cotton Mather (who held Ames in high esteem), echoes this same notion in his *Bonifactus* (1710), stating, the “great end” of life is, “to do good.”⁴⁴ Indeed, Janice Knight’s *Orthodoxies in Massachusetts* describes the ‘Amesian’ divines as “pragmatists rather than pietists,” who emphasise the conditionality of the covenant, and for whom, she writes, “happiness was always deferred.”⁴⁵

Therefore, there is good evidence that Edwards’s teleological project is initially motivated to counter, not an anthropocentric Enlightenment seeking to subordinate the divine glory, but an intensely ‘practical’ Enlightenment, influencing Calvinists and non-Calvinists alike to exalt practical virtue and subordinate or eradicate happiness from the teleological vision. When this context is appreciated, Edwards’s early conviction that “happiness is the end of the creation” is less “surprising.” It only seems surprising when it is assumed that Edwards’s “end of creation” project is primarily aimed at promoting the divine glory. Furthermore, Edwards’s defense of happiness as ultimate *telos* becomes even more plausible when we take into consideration the tendency of his own theological tradition to subordinate human happiness relative to God’s

⁴² Norman Fiering, *Moral Philosophy at Seventeenth Century Harvard* (University of North Carolina Press, 1981), 76; Jill Kraye, “Conceptions of Moral Philosophy,” in *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth Century Philosophy, Volume II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1299.

⁴³ Ames, *Marrow*, 78.

⁴⁴ Holifield, *Theology in America*, 64. Cotton Mather’s *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702) gives William Ames high praise. Eusden, “Introduction,” *Marrow*, 11.

⁴⁵ Janice Knight, *Orthodoxies in Massachusetts: Rereading American Puritanism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), 81. Douglas Winiarski also describes “the ‘practical Protestantism’ that pervaded New England,” which took the form of “a godly ‘walk’...” Douglas L. Winiarski, *Darkness Falls on the Land of the Light: Experiencing Religious Awakenings in Eighteenth-Century New England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 18, 29.

glory, which indeed motivates and shapes the defense of Edwards's Reformed teleology of happiness. These aspects of Edwards's intellectual context, which have received little attention, are crucial to understanding Edwards's teleological project, enabling us to see that Edwards sought to defend, not the glory of God *per se*, but spiritual happiness as the "end of creation." Edwards sensed a crisis surrounding the high teleological status of happiness, which he considered an eminently Scriptural doctrine, and he responded by defending, with intense and enduring effort, a Reformed teleology of happiness.

4. The Internal Context and the Shape of this Study

While the external intellectual context of Edwards's project is essential, Edwards's own writings and internal context represents the foundation of this thesis. The primary sources not only point to the aforementioned intellectual currents, they reveal Edwards's explicit efforts to prove and defend his teleology of happiness over the course of his entire career, especially in his *Miscellanies*, *Discourse on the Trinity*, and *End of Creation*. This dissertation is shaped by the development of Edwards's thought, particularly his teleology in relation to various other doctrines, as it is progressively revealed throughout Edwards's career. Edwards first experiences spiritual happiness as ultimate at his conversion and during the years 1721-23. He then immediately sets himself to prove happiness as ultimate *telos* in light of the rival views we have discussed. After proving "happiness is the end of the creation" in Misc. 87, "Happiness," Edwards begins his career long "end of creation" project, which is aimed at defending his teleology of happiness within a Reformed and Trinitarian theological framework.

The chapters of this study are shaped by the development of Edwards's thought and are organized as follows. Chapter 1, "Edwards and Happiness: An Intellectual Background," will describe the intellectual context regarding the concept of happiness and Edwards's profound early experience of spiritual

happiness that influence his teleological thinking. Chapter 2, "Teleology: 'Happiness is the End of the Creation,'" will demonstrate that Edwards's early religious experience and awareness of rival teleological visions influence his desire to understand and explain happiness as ultimate *telos*, and explain the way in which Edwards initially proves his teleology of happiness. Chapter 3, "The Happiness of God," demonstrates Edwards's initial steps toward defending his teleology of happiness within a Reformed theological framework, especially by establishing his doctrine of God and the Trinity for the sake of this teleological vision. Chapter 4, "The Happiness of Redemption," reveals the way that Edwards develops and integrates his redemptive historical perspective for the sake of bolstering his Reformed teleology of happiness, and Chapter 5, "The Happiness of God's Glory," describes the way that Edwards works to define his doctrine of divine glory in terms of happiness for the sake of his Reformed teleology of happiness.

Chapter 1. Edwards and Happiness: An Intellectual Background

1.1 Introduction

While it has been common to devalue or dismiss Edwards's earliest teleological conviction, "happiness is the end of the creation" as erroneous and merely temporary,¹ my thesis will demonstrate that this teleological view is essential to interpreting the Edwards corpus, especially Edwards's "end of creation" project. Most scholars characterize the starting point of Edwards's teleological project as either an unbiased philosophical query into the purpose of creation, or an effort to solve the teleological dichotomy between God's glory and human happiness, or a defense of the supremacy of the glory of God. However, what Edwards's early career actually reveals is a particular agenda aimed at proving happiness as "the end of creation," a teleological conviction he spends the rest of his career defending within a Reformed theological framework. The present chapter will begin to explain why Edwards undertakes this project at all. While it is likely the young Edwards inherits this general teleological idea from his own philosophical and theological heritage,² my research points to two incremental factors that help explain Edwards's motivation to prove happiness as ultimate *telos* during this early stage, and then defend its orthodoxy in subsequent years.

¹ Edwards's teleological statement in Misc. 3, "Happiness is the End of the Creation," is deemed as surprising and merely temporary by McClymond and McDermott: "He seems to have passed through three stages. In the initial phase, Edwards maintained the view – *surprising* in light of the later *End of Creation* – that human happiness *per se* was God's ultimate end in creating." Schultz's interpretation is the same: "His initial view was that creature happiness *alone* was God's purpose..." Edwards's teleology of happiness is interpreted as strange and temporary, particularly as it relates to the "the biblical teaching that God created the world for his own 'name,' 'glory,' or 'praise,'" which McClymond and McDermott claim Edwards 'notices' several years later. McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 11-12, 213; Schultz, "Jonathan Edwards' End of Creation," 32.

² "That all creatures seek the good and that the highest good for man is 'happiness' almost everyone agreed," writes Norman Fiering of seventeenth century Harvard, where happiness is comprehended by most as "the ultimate end of human activity." Fiering, *Seventeenth-Century Harvard*, 75.

The first factor, which will be explained in the present chapter, is *experiential*. Edwards's conversion and subsequent religious experience is especially marked by a rigorously theocentric, spiritual happiness, or "delight" in God. Having become profoundly convinced of spiritual happiness as *experientially* ultimate at the time of his conversion during the summer of 1721, Edwards soon after sets himself to prove Christian happiness as *teleologically* ultimate. The second factor, which will be explained in Chapter 2, is *polemical*, that is, Edwards's newfound experiential conviction in this traditional, albeit not uncontroversial, doctrine is worthy of Edwards's defense due to the existence of real opposition. As explained in my introduction, there exists controversy within Edwards's theological tradition deriving from concern for the teleological status of practical obedience and the glory of God, as well as among non-Calvinist thinkers during the Early Enlightenment, as they begin to challenge the notion of spiritual happiness as ultimate *telos*, preferring instead the more practical concerns of virtue, benevolence and the common good.

Therefore, while Edwards's doctrine of spiritual happiness as ultimate *telos* is inherited from his own Reformed and philosophical traditions, it emerges when it does and the way it does due to both Edwards's profound early Christian experience and his subsequent awareness of the intellectual opposition. These factors help demonstrate that Edwards's starting point regarding his "end of creation" project is best characterized as a positive teleological thesis about happiness that derives from his own experience and tradition, rather than a desire to solve a perennial conundrum about creation, or prove the teleological status of the God's glory in the face of an Enlightened humanism. Thus, it will be demonstrated that Edwards's early conviction, "happiness is the end of the creation," is not a misguided and merely temporary, early stage of thinking, but rather a foundational conviction that Edwards is particularly motivated to prove due to specific influences, and which he subsequently seeks to defend within a Trinitarian and Reformed theological framework over the course of his career. Again, the present chapter will discuss the profound impact of Edwards's early

experience of spiritual happiness, and it will also provide an intellectual background for the concept of happiness, which helps us comprehend the early experiential and intellectual shift that motivates Edwards's pursuit of proving happiness as ultimate *telos*.

1.2 Edwards's Early Religious Experience of Happiness

"Edwards's theological and philosophical reflections," writes Marsden, "were closely related to his personal religious experience."³ Accordingly, my suggestion is that at the time of his conversion and subsequent two years (1721-23),⁴ Edwards discovers spiritual happiness as the supreme and ultimate experience of the Christian life, which motivates him to explain this experience in philosophical and theological terms. What Edwards discovers as *experientially* ultimate, he seeks to prove and defend as *teleologically* ultimate.

Marsden is not alone in perceiving the intimate relationship between Edwards's theology and his early religious experience. That the intense spiritual experiences of the years 1721-23 make a profound and lasting impact on Edwards's theology and philosophy is not infrequently argued. William Morris writes, "Before the thought came the experience; with the experience came the thought."⁵ Regarding his conversion, Morris writes:

This highly significant account makes it quite clear that the conversion of Edwards was regarded by Edwards himself as the central fact of his life. Not the reading of Locke, or the study of Newton, but the experience of conversion, the data which it gave to him, and the new questions that it

³ George M. Marsden, "Biography," in *Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, 23.

⁴ According to his *Diary* and *Personal Narrative*, Edwards's season of intense "Christian fervor" begins with his conversion in the spring of 1721, and lasts until the fall of 1723, when Edwards receives his M.A. from Yale and begins his Bolton, Connecticut pastorate. This period includes the final year of Edwards's graduate study at Yale (1721-22), his eight month New York pastorate (1722-23), and time at home in East Windsor, Connecticut during the summer of 1723. Edwards, *Personal Narrative*, *WJE* 16, 803; Wilson H. Kimnach, "Preface to the New York Period," in *WJE* 10, 267-68.

⁵ William S. Morris, *The Young Jonathan Edwards* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2005), 20.

forced him to ask were the dominating factors in the whole of his subsequent life and thought.⁶

Morris argues that Edwards's conversion experience provided him with new "data" and therefore, "new questions" he felt compelled to ask and explore, questions that would dominate his later writings. A new "notion of the spirit," is "extracted from his own personal life," writes Morris, which "soon finds a dominant and permanent place in the metaphysical thought that underlies both his theological and philosophical thinking."⁷ Similarly, Bombaro claims that Edwards's conversion experience provides him with a new "vision of reality" that "became to him a permanent, pervasive, and axiomatic mental principle."⁸ Marsden argues that the early conversion experience is crucial to the interpretation of Edwards, as it "involved a major intellectual component."⁹

Without an appreciation of the intensity of these life-transforming experiences and their monumental implications for all else that he did, it is impossible to make sense of Edwards.¹⁰

The ideas that emerged out of Edwards's conversion experience, claims Marsden, "became the framework for his thought throughout his life."¹¹ While a consensus exists regarding a connection between Edwards's religious experience and his thought, there is less agreement on the precise content of Edwards's experience. McClymond and McDermott emphasize the aesthetic aspect of Edwards's conversion experience. These commentators argue that God's beauty is the central theme of Edwards's conversion. Edwards, they claim, "came to see the beauty of God's holiness" at his conversion, and thereafter, "Edwards began his emphasis on beauty that evolved into the most developed aesthetic theology in the history of western Christian thought."¹²

⁶ Ibid, 38-39.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Bombaro, *Jonathan Edwards's Vision of Reality*, 12.

⁹ Marsden, "Biography," 22.

¹⁰ Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 44.

¹¹ Marsden, "Biography," 22.

¹² McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 24-25.

However, Morris makes the point that that it is experience itself that arrests Edwards, characterizing his subsequent philosophical theology, a “metaphysic of experience.” Morris calls the empirical bent of Edwards’s thought, a “rational piety,” whereby Edwards’s ideas are “abstracted from his own personal life” and endure throughout his entire career.¹³ Edwards’s conversion reveals two concepts that lastingly impact Edwards’s understanding of “authentic” Christian experience according to Morris: first, a “new kind of cognitive and affective element,” and second, an “objective ground and God-centeredness.”¹⁴

Many scholars agree with the God-centered, or theocentric, nature of Edwards’s early religious experience, as with Marsden who emphasizes the fresh and joyful apprehension of God’s glory, goodness, and sovereignty¹⁵ that convinces Edwards that “human understanding of everything must start with the God of Christianity.”¹⁶ Similarly, Bombaro argues that Edwards’s conversion cultivates a God-centered “vision of reality,” whereby he gains a profound sense of God’s sovereignty and purpose in all things. “Following the events of spring 1721,” writes Bombaro, “he began to “see” God’s being, telic purposes, and cosmic design “in everything,” and these “conditioned God-centered impulses became to him a permanent, pervasive, and axiomatic mental principle.”¹⁷ According to Bombaro, Edwards’s conversion produces a new “vision of reality” characterized by a the principle of “telic-theocentricity” and “God’s program of self-glorification.”¹⁸ Thus, it is commonly perceived that during his early career, Edwards comes to experience, and begins to “see,” God’s sovereignty and self-glorifying purpose in all things.

Without denying the general validity of these theories, my thesis suggests a perspective that has been largely ignored. That is, at his conversion, Edwards

¹³ Morris, *Young Jonathan Edwards*, 20, 19.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 39-40.

¹⁵ Marsden, “Biography,” 22.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 22.

¹⁷ Bombaro, *Jonathan Edwards’s Vision of Reality*, 12.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 18.

comes to experience *a new happiness*, an enjoyment and delight in God that is profound, preeminent, and ultimate. Having become convinced of the ultimate place of happiness in Christian experience, Edwards is likewise motivated to prove and defend spiritual happiness as the ultimate *telos* of God's creative and redemptive purposes. Thomas Schafer, who has pored over Edwards's *Miscellanies* notebook and early personal writings in unparalleled fashion, is keen to emphasise the centrality and influence of spiritual happiness in Edwards's early Christian experience:

The entries that Edwards made in his "Diary" and "Miscellanies" while he was in New York reflect his preoccupation with the cultivation of spiritual and moral discipline, and with *the delights he experienced* in seasons of Bible study and prayerful communion with God. It was a time in which *the philosophical speculations and religious raptures of his graduate years became more self-consciously interrelated* as he meditated on the great themes of redemption by Christ. In his only back-reference to "Natural Philosophy" during the months in New York he affirmed that as "God... and other spirits are more substantial than matter," so "no happiness is solid and substantial but spiritual happiness" (No. f). *The spiritual happiness of communion with God was now Edwards' dominant experience* in spite of the struggles recorded in his "Diary."¹⁹

Note that Schafer is convinced of two important things. First, Edwards's "dominant experience" in 1722-23 in New York is "spiritual happiness." Schafer perceives that Edwards is preoccupied "with the delights he experienced." And second, his experience of this spiritual happiness "became more self-consciously interrelated" with his "philosophical speculations." Edwards's early notebook entries, writes Schafer, "record the ways in which his own religious experience and speculative bent gave a distinct character to his theology."²⁰ Marsden, while less explicit, agrees with this notion. In the same place that he comments on Edwards's attention to the Trinity in the early *Miscellanies*, writing, "The very end for which this supremely social being created the universe was, as he wrote in an early entry, "the communication of happiness to his

¹⁹ Thomas A. Schafer, "Editor's Introduction," in *WJE* 13, 43-44 (emphasis added).

²⁰ *Ibid*, 15.

creatures,” Marsden writes, “Jonathan’s contemplative joys were of piece with his philosophy and theology.”²¹ Indeed, Edwards’s early Christian experience is, as I will demonstrate, particularly marked by a spiritual happiness that influences and shapes his philosophy, theology – and teleology.

1.3 Happiness: Historical Background

In order to comprehend the significance of Edwards’s profound experience with respect to happiness, it will be necessary to examine the historical context. In what follows I will describe non-Calvinist Enlightenment, as well as Puritan and Reformed, versions of happiness, of which Edwards would have been aware. This background will help us identify the marked shift in Edwards’s experience and perspective, as Edwards transitions away from certain categories of Early Modern happiness and toward a ‘new’ spiritual happiness in the tradition of the beatific vision, which motivates him to develop his teleology of happiness.

1.3.1 Happiness Terminology

Edwards is not unlike his Enlightenment contemporaries in utilizing a wide array of terminology to express the concept of happiness. Unfortunately, Edwards does not explicitly or consistently delineate the meanings of the other terms he uses, such as delight, joy, pleasure, and complacency, which practice is also not uncharacteristic of the Christian tradition and the Early Modern period.²² While certain distinctions will occasionally be observed, we must in general accept Edwards’s dynamic application of a myriad of interrelated and overlapping terms, which practice is exceedingly common to this period.

²¹ Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 77.

²² Ellen Charry observes this dynamic in Thomas Aquinas, who “discusses happiness in various writings, but discerning a pattern among them is difficult because he does not always name the various kinds of happiness as he considers them, nor is his word usage consistent.” Ellen T. Charry, *God and the Art of Happiness* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010), 91.

The Puritan and Reformed tradition uses a wide variety of overlapping terminology to express Christian happiness, and scholars tend to deemphasize the interpretive value of distinctions between such terms as happiness, blessedness, joy, delight, felicity, and pleasure. For example, “Happiness is synonymous with the believer’s joy,” writes S. Bryn Roberts in his *Puritanism and the Pursuit of Happiness*.²³ Roberts makes the same case for the term ‘blessed,’ or *beatitudo*: “Venning and his fellow puritan authors understand as synonymous ‘happy’ and ‘blessed.’”²⁴ Muller observes the same dynamic in Reformed theological texts on the happiness of God: “the doctrine of divine blessedness or happiness concerns one attribute, not two.”²⁵ Furthermore, writes Muller, the concept of blessedness, or happiness is “conveyed, not through a single term, but through several predicates that are used almost interchangeably....blessedness or beatitude (*beatitudo*), joy or happiness (*felicitas*), delight (*delectation*), and contentment or self-fulfillment (*complacencia*).”²⁶ Randy Alcorn makes the same point about Puritan and Reformed theology (and the biblical terminology), that “words translated joy, gladness, and delight are synonyms of happiness.”²⁷

Similarly, the philosophers and non-Calvinist religious thinkers of the Enlightenment employ a wide range of interrelated terms. Rowan Boyson argues against strict delineations with Enlightenment happiness terminology, writing, “all these terms must be seen as existing in a rich and productive matrix.”²⁸ For example, in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689), John Locke writes, “satisfaction, delight, pleasure, happiness” are but “different

²³ Roberts, *Puritanism and the Pursuit of Happiness*, 87. Alcorn also cites various influential religious writers of the Early Modern era, such as Jonathan Edwards, Richard Baxter, and William Law, equating joy and happiness. Alcorn, *Happiness*, 38.

²⁴ Roberts, *Puritanism and the Pursuit of Happiness*, 86.

²⁵ Muller, *PRRD3*, 372.

²⁶ *Ibid*, 381.

²⁷ Alcorn, *Happiness*, xii.

²⁸ Rowan Boyson, *Wordsworth and the Enlightenment Idea of Pleasure* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 9.

degrees of the same thing.”²⁹ Therefore, terms such as happiness, joy, delight, pleasure, and complacency overlap and interrelate in a dynamic way during the Early Modern period, and the Edwards corpus is no different. However, linguistic ambiguities notwithstanding, this study will strive to clarify basic distinctions within the language of happiness when ascertainable within Edwards’s writings and the historical sources.

1.3.2 Non-Calvinist Enlightenment Happiness

Adam Potkay has argued that among the *philosophes* of the Enlightenment era, the concept of happiness retains the classical Greek ethical heritage of *eudaimonia*. Happiness, writes Potkay, is “an ethical ideal,” or, a “secular ideal of rational contentment through ethical conduct.”³⁰ Joy, on the other hand, represents “primarily a mental state” that is not necessarily ethical, but more episodic, argues Potkay. Joy is “a responsive state...often correlated to categories of stimuli,”³¹ and is associated with other such terms as “delight,” as with Locke: “Joy is a delight of the Mind, from the consideration of the present or assured approaching possession of a Good.”³² The term ‘pleasure’ is similar to joy and delight and derives from the Latin *placere*, to please, and its neutral sense carries the meaning of “consciousness or sensation induced by the enjoyment or anticipation of what is felt or viewed as good or desireable; enjoyment, delight, gratification.”³³ Happiness, however, refers most often to human flourishing in the broadest sense and represents a primarily ethical concept that “tends to be a more uniform attribute or achievement.” Happiness, writes Potkay, “is a technology of the self.”³⁴

²⁹ John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Peter H. Nidditch (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 128-29.

³⁰ Adam Potkay, *The Story of Joy: From the Bible to Late Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3, 21.

³¹ *Ibid*, 2-3.

³² *Ibid*, 4.

³³ Boyson, *Wordsworth and the Enlightenment Idea of Pleasure*, 3.

³⁴ Potkay, *Story of Joy*, 3.

Darrin McMahon likewise discerns the Enlightenment trend toward conceiving of happiness as a “technology of the self,” which he describes as a shift away from traditional theological explanations:

The Enlightenment fundamentally altered this long-standing (transcendental-religious) conception, presenting happiness as something to which all human beings could aspire in this life. The basic default position of humanity, *happiness was not a gift from God* or a trick of fate, a reward for exceptional behavior, *but a natural human endowment attainable in theory by every man, woman, and child*. Indeed, where human beings were unhappy, Enlightenment thinkers argued, something must be wrong...Change these things – change ourselves – and we could become in practice what all were intended to by nature be.³⁵

McMahaon argues that Enlightenment versions of happiness drift away from theological definitions toward anthropological definitions. Countless Enlightenment texts articulate happiness as an individual achievement, as seventeenth century English poet William Wycherley describes: “We from ourselves alone, and not from Fate, Derive our happy, or unhappy State...”³⁶ Likewise, Edwards’s contemporary, moral philosopher George Turnbull comments that “our chief interest” is “dependent on ourselves...happiness...be our own acquisition.”³⁷ During the Enlightenment, non-Calvinist thinkers, whether deist, moral philosopher, metaphysician, or latitudinarian, generally adhere to the conception of happiness as an achievement of the self, and to this end, they appropriate the ancient philosophical frameworks, as Nicolas White observes:

The views about happiness that form part of these early modern philosophers’ doctrines make very substantial use of elements from ancient philosophy: Plato, Aristotle, Stoicism, and Epicureanism.³⁸

³⁵ Darrin M. McMahon, *Happiness: A History* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2006), 13 (emphasis added).

³⁶ William Wycherley, quoted by McMahon, *Happiness*, 195.

³⁷ George Turnbull, *The Principles of Moral Philosophy An Enquiry Into the Wise and Good Government of the Moral World*, Vol. 1 (London: White Heart, 1740), 202.

³⁸ Nicholas White, *A Brief History of Happiness* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 103-4. Similarly, Brian Michael Norton argues that eighteenth-century “inquiries after

The influential philosophies of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke are representative of Enlightenment versions of Epicurean “subjective models of happiness.”³⁹ Pleasure, whatever its source, is what produces happiness. This conception of happiness is relativistic and subjective, as opposed to versions defined by an objective religious and moral framework.⁴⁰ McMahon characterizes Enlightenment happiness as tending to “separate happiness from its religious and metaphysical past,”⁴¹ and Roy Porter describes Enlightenment happiness as “the increasing embracement, however uneven and qualified, of the pursuit of temporal happiness (conceived as pleasure) as the *summum bonum*.”⁴² Therefore, in some respects, the concept of happiness takes a sharp relativistic and subjective turn during the Enlightenment toward Epicurean pleasure and away from traditionally objective, moral and theological versions, as Charles Taylor describes, “Each person is the best judge of his own happiness,” producing a revolutionary confidence in “the individual’s freedom to determine the goals of his or her own life and own definition of happiness.”⁴³

Yet, while the relativistic version of happiness as pleasure becomes prominent during the Enlightenment, the conception of happiness based on some form of virtue appears to be just as dominant, especially among Edwards’s Enlightenment sources. The happiness of virtue is rooted in

happiness” are “elaborated within the framework of eudaemonist ethics, especially influenced by the Stoics and Epicureans.” Brian Michael Norton, “After the *Summum Bonum*: Eighteenth-Century Inquiries after Happiness,” in *Fiction and the Philosophy of Happiness: Ethical Inquiries in the Age of Enlightenment*, ed. Brian Michael Norton (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2012), 133. That the ancient categories of happiness persist during the Enlightenment is also evidenced by David Hume’s “Moral and Political” essays of 1742: “The Epicurean,” “The Stoic,” “The Platonist,” and “The Sceptic.” David Hume, *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, ed. Eugene F. Miller (Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1985).

³⁹ Norton, “After the *Summum Bonum*,” 8-10.

⁴⁰ Brian Michael Norton, “Conclusion: The Art of Life in the Age of Enlightenment,” in *Fiction and the Philosophy of Happiness*, 133-34.

⁴¹ McMahon, *Happiness*, 14.

⁴² Roy Porter, *The Creation of the Modern World: The Untold Story of the British Enlightenment* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2000), 258.

⁴³ Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 82-83.

Aristotle's *eudaimonia*, which represents the "supreme good" of human existence, and is defined as "the activity (*energeia*) of man's soul in accordance with virtue (*arête*)."⁴⁴ Stoic versions of happiness have a similar tendency during the Enlightenment, as David Hume describes, "The great end of all human industry, is the attainment of happiness," which is enjoyed by "the man of virtue."⁴⁵ The Stoic's "satisfaction," according to Hume, derives from the virtuous "sentiments of the human mind....when he looks within" and sees this "moral beauty."⁴⁶ This trend is tersely summarised by Alexander Pope, who writes in his *Essay on Man*, "Virtue alone is happiness below."⁴⁷

While a few of Edwards's non-Calvinist sources promote the Epicurean notion of happiness as pleasure, the vast majority of them believe that the path to happiness is through Stoic virtue and practical benevolence. "Belief in the intimate association of happiness and virtue," McMahon writes, "was widely shared in the eighteenth century."⁴⁸ In fact, by the eighteenth century, the happiness of virtue achieves the "status of a self-evident truth," with rival views "regarded as incredible," according to James Ferguson.⁴⁹ A prime example is Francis Hutcheson's conception of happiness. "The fullest human happiness, on Hutcheson's view," writes Taylor, "is attained when we give full reign to our moral sentiments and feelings of benevolence."⁵⁰ The British moral philosophers and the deists of the eighteenth century increasingly conceive of happiness in the form of virtue, or the benevolent disposition, or moral sentiment. As Taylor

⁴⁴ Jill Kraye, "Moral Philosophy," in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, eds. Charles B. Schmitt and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 330.

⁴⁵ Hume, "The Stoic," *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, 148.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 152.

⁴⁷ Alexander Pope, *Essay on Man*, quoted by Matthew Stewart, *Nature's God: The Heretical Origins of the American Republic* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2015) 282.

⁴⁸ Darrin McMahon, "From the Happiness of Virtue to the Virtue of Happiness: 400 B.C.-A.D. 1780," *Daedalus*, Vol. 133, No. 2 (2004): 6.

⁴⁹ James P. Ferguson, *The Philosophy of Dr. Samuel Clarke and its Critics* (New York: Vantage Press, 1974), 188.

⁵⁰ Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 267.

puts it, “Benevolence must be added to the rational pursuit of happiness if we are to live fully by nature’s design...beneficence is just the best strategy for personal happiness.”⁵¹ Whether Enlightenment *philosophe*, British moralist, deist, or latitudinarian, the happiness of virtue represents a dominant Enlightenment trend among Edwards’s influential sources.

However, at the same time as Enlightenment thinkers strive to unify virtue and happiness, this version of happiness becomes an “obdurately problematic concept,” according to White.⁵² Beginning with Descartes, controversy and debate emerge due to an “uncomfortable dualism” between happiness and virtue.⁵³ White argues that during the Enlightenment, several moral philosophers begin to comprehend “ethical standards” and “an individual’s happiness” as “two independent kinds of consideration,” particularly Richard Cumberland, Samuel Clarke, and Joseph Butler.⁵⁴ White describes a “sharp posing of the conflict between obligation and one’s own happiness” emerging during the Enlightenment,⁵⁵ and Matthew Stewart identifies the source of this dichotomy as a “transcendental” conception of morality that makes virtue and happiness “orthogonal, if not fundamentally at odds.”⁵⁶

Taylor argues that the Enlightenment fails to solve the dichotomy between pleasure and morality, with “perplexities and fudgings” arising from “the difficulty in understanding...moral motivation,” and “the relation between hedonism as a motivational theory and the benevolence that utilitarian practice seems to suppose.”⁵⁷ White argues that the dichotomy between personal happiness and morality not only persists, but it worsens throughout the Early Modern period.⁵⁸ As Norton writes, the “effort to stitch back together the moral

⁵¹ Ibid, 281-82.

⁵² White, *Brief History of Happiness*, x.

⁵³ Norton, “After the *Summum Bonum*,” 2-3, 133-34.

⁵⁴ White, *Brief History of Happiness*, 124-25.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 124, 128.

⁵⁶ Stewart, *Nature’s God*, 273.

⁵⁷ Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 83.

⁵⁸ White, *Brief History of Happiness*, 128.

and the subjective aspects of the human good was not so easily accomplished. The challenges would only increase..."⁵⁹ Therefore, while happiness is increasingly conceived of as virtuous, or ethical, during the Enlightenment, the problematic nature of reconciling happiness with virtue also surfaces, which, furthermore, appears to confuse and weaken the traditionally strong teleological status of happiness, which Edwards's perceives.

1.3.3 *The Christian Happiness Tradition*

Edwards's conception of happiness, and his emphasis on happiness, does not, however, appear to be the result of Enlightenment influence *per se*, as is often assumed, but it derives most directly from his own theological heritage, especially the Reformed and medieval traditions, for which happiness represents a perennially important subject. Of course Edwards's thinking about happiness is not developed in isolation from Enlightenment influence, but the development of his thought manifests a consistently strong continuity with his own Christian tradition, especially after his conversion. However, for various reasons, scholars have failed to appreciate this important point.

The perception that Edwards's emphasis on happiness derives from Enlightenment intellectual trends is most likely due to the scholarly consensus that Enlightenment thinkers were uniquely "obsessed" with happiness.⁶⁰ McDermott reveals this line of thinking when he argues that Edwards accommodates the Enlightenment "obsession" with happiness for the sake of his Christian apologetic, writing, "In 1724, *Edwards co-opted the Enlightenment obsession with human happiness* to argue for the disinterested virtue of the

⁵⁹ Norton, "After the *Summum Bonum*," 7.

⁶⁰ "There can be no question that the eighteenth century was obsessed with happiness in a dramatic and unprecedented way." Vivasvan Soni, *Mourning Happiness: Narrative and the Politics of Modernity* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2012), 2; Lester Crocker describes happiness during the Enlightenment as a "universal, omnipresent preoccupation." Lester Crocker, quoted by Norton, "After the *Summum Bonum*," 1.

deity.”⁶¹ For McDermott, happiness represents an “Enlightenment assumption” that “Edwards creatively coopted...to serve Reformed theology.”⁶² Of course Enlightenment trends influence Edwards, however, it is inaccurate to explain the existence of, and emphasis on, happiness in the Edwards corpus as a function of the Enlightenment “obsession” with happiness. Edwards’s high view of happiness and its prominent place in his writings is not the result of ‘co-opting’ a contemporary Enlightenment view, but rather, it derives from his own biblical and theological convictions. Happiness is not a peripheral concept utilized by Edwards to bridge the Christian faith to an Enlightenment worldview, but rather, absolutely central to his conception of both the Christian faith and God’s ultimate purposes.

Versions of happiness in Edwards’s Puritan and Reformed tradition reveal strong continuity with the medieval and Reformation view that happiness is a foundationally theological concept, the ultimate source of which is the Creator, rather than the creature. As English Puritan Thomas Brooks writes, “God is the author of all true happiness; he is the donor of all true happiness; he is the maintainer of all true happiness, and he is the centre of all true happiness.”⁶³ Similarly, Muller writes that for the Reformed, “God is both blessed *in se* and the source (*fons*) of all blessedness.”⁶⁴

In Reformed theological circles, the term happiness is most commonly derived from the Latin terms, *beatitudo* and *felicitas*. *Beatitudo* is normally translated as blessedness, or happiness and is very often associated with the *beatitudo aeterna*, the “final condition in eternity,” the perfection of the soul, both of intellect *and* will, the “perfect vision and enjoyment (*frui*, q.v.) of God.”⁶⁵ However, as we will see, several writers during the Early Modern period,

⁶¹ McDermott, *Jonathan Edwards Confronts the Gods*, 90 (emphasis added).

⁶² *Ibid*, 10.

⁶³ Thomas Brooks, quoted by Alcorn, *Happiness*, 89.

⁶⁴ Richard Muller, *PRRD3*, 382.

⁶⁵ Richard A. Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms: Drawn Principally from Protestant Scholastic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1985), 57.

including John Calvin and John Owen, do increasingly describe this blessed state of Christian happiness as initiated during the earthly existence. *Felicitas*, according to Muller, translated as felicity, or happiness, is closely associated with *beatitudo*, but has a meaning closer to the “attainment of the good,” i.e. God, who is the *summum bonum*, and therefore:

[T]he happiness of man in this life must be defined in terms of the good toward which the individual is directed, with the result that true human happiness arises only out of the right ordering of life in the recognition that fellowship with God in Christ is the goal of human existence and the glory of God (Gloria Dei, q.v.) is the ultimate end of all mankind.⁶⁶

The term ‘joy’ derives from the Latin *gaudium*, and appears, as with Locke’s definition, to represent a particularly episodic attainment of good, and is closely associated with other terms such as delight,⁶⁷ from the Latin *delectation*, and of course, cognates ‘rejoice,’ and ‘enjoyment.’ Aquinas’s definition of joy is inherited by the Puritan and Reformed tradition, and is very close to Edwards’s use of the term. For Aquinas, joy is the fruition of love; as Potkay puts it, “love with desire attains joy (*gaudium*), which is the soul’s union with its object, a state in which the desire and the will are at rest.”⁶⁸ Therefore, terms like felicity, joy, and delight appear to represent an episodic mental or emotional state related to a particular fulfillment of the will, or love, in the possession or attainment of a specific good, while happiness, or blessedness, is associated with a more broadly comprehensive state of perfection of both intellect and will, the source of which is the *visio Dei*. Thus, while precise delineations are impossible, it does appear that with Edwards and the Christian tradition, the blessedness, or happiness, of the beatific vision of God appears to be the broadest and most summative term, as it consists of the knowledge of God, and the love – and joy, or the enjoyment, of God, while joy and delight relate more particularly to the will as the fruition of the love, via the possession of the *summum bonum*, i.e. God.

⁶⁶ Muller, *Dictionary*, 114.

⁶⁷ Potkay, *Story of Joy*, 4, 5.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 13.

The medieval, Reformation, and Puritan traditions appear to manifest three distinct, yet related, versions of happiness. The first version is happiness in God himself, akin to the ‘beatific vision,’ or beatific enjoyment of God, which has its roots in the medieval tradition, and is also prevalent in Puritan and Reformed theology. The second is happiness derived more directly from the gospel, or what God has done for the subject’s salvation, experienced variously as the joy of faith, peace with God, and assurance of salvation. The source of happiness is God, yet the immediate object of joy and happiness is the gospel and the benefits of the gospel. This version of happiness emerges with special force during the Reformation and continues throughout the Puritan era. The third version, which is promoted increasingly during the Early Modern period within both Puritan and latitudinarian circles, is the happiness of godliness, the source of which is the godly activity of the individual. Lastly, notwithstanding some controversy and influential objectors, spiritual happiness is frequently understood as the ultimate *telos* of God’s creative and redemptive purposes, as Thomas Watson writes, “He has no design upon us, but to make us happy.”⁶⁹

1.3.3.1 *The Medieval Beatific Enjoyment of God*

The medieval background is crucial as it is the body of Christian thought that, except for Reformation theology, most influences the Puritan and Reformed theology of Edwards’s heritage.⁷⁰ Muller has demonstrated Reformed orthodoxy’s continuity with the medieval theology, especially Aquinas,⁷¹ whose doctrine of happiness influences Puritan New England.⁷² Of the medieval version of happiness, Georg Wieland writes, “true happiness is to be found only in the enjoyment of the contemplation of God (*frui Deo*) in the world to come.”⁷³

⁶⁹ Thomas Watson, quoted by Alcorn, *Happiness*, xii.

⁷⁰ Fiering, *Seventeenth Century Harvard*, 66.

⁷¹ Richard A. Muller, *PRRD1*, 17.

⁷² Fiering, *Seventeenth Century Harvard*, 75.

⁷³ Georg Wieland, “Happiness: The Perfection of Man,” in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*, ed. Norman Kretzmann et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 673.

As Aquinas writes, “There can be no complete and final happiness for us save in the vision of God.”⁷⁴ To express the concept happiness, Aquinas employs two Latin terms, *felicitas* and *beatitudo*, which consists of the “comprehensive knowledge of God.”⁷⁵ Only the “enjoyment of the beatific vision” can satisfy, writes Brian Davies of Aquinas’s conception of happiness.⁷⁶ While the beatific enjoyment is only perfect in the afterlife, Davies argues that Aquinas eases the rigor of Augustine’s eschatological stance, as the delight of knowing God begins during the earthly existence.⁷⁷ Aquinas’s conviction is that no natural ability can achieve the beatific happiness, of which God is the sole object and source, as he writes, “man’s happiness exists in God alone.”⁷⁸

Istvan Bejczy argues that while the late-medieval doctrine of happiness retains “Aristotle’s idea that happiness resides in acting in accordance with virtue,” medieval doctors particularly “associated this happiness with the contemplation of God” in order to oppose Stoic notions of happiness as human virtue.⁷⁹ Similarly, Kitanov argues that Augustine “developed the concept both as a way of giving teleological orientation to Christian learning and as a way of distinguishing the Christian ideal of heavenly beatitude from rival philosophical – Neo-Platonic and Stoic – conceptions of human flourishing.”⁸⁰ Indeed, the beatific enjoyment of God is considered by the medieval doctors to be the ultimate *telos* of human existence.⁸¹

⁷⁴ Aquinas, quoted by Brian Davies, *Thomas Aquinas’ SUMMA THEOLOGIAE: A Guide & Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 157.

⁷⁵ Charrý, *God and the Art of Happiness*, 91.

⁷⁶ Davies, *Thomas Aquinas’ SUMMA THEOLOGIAE*, 157.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 157-58.

⁷⁸ Aquinas, quoted by Roberts, *Puritanism and the Pursuit of Happiness*, 91-92, n. 105.

⁷⁹ Istvan P. Bejczy, “Virtue as an End in Itself: The Medieval Unease with a Stoic Idea” in *Christian Humanism: Essays in Honour of Arjo Vanderjagt*, ed. Alisdair A. MacDonald et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 116, 117-18.

⁸⁰ Severin Valentinov Kitanov, *Beatific Enjoyment in Medieval Scholastic Debates: The Complex Legacy of Saint Augustine and Peter Lombard* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014), xiii.

⁸¹ McMahon, “From the Happiness of Virtue to the Virtue of Happiness,” 11.

The medieval theologians believe that “God is the quintessence of happiness.”⁸² According to Wieland, there exists, numerically one divine happiness, in which human beings “participate,” referred to by Aquinas as “created happiness,” consisting of the contemplation of God, “the activity in which individual happiness consists: ‘the means by which happiness (=God) is united with us.’”⁸³ As Van Dyke puts it, Aquinas “describes complete happiness as a union of our minds with God that consists in the activity of knowing and loving God,”⁸⁴ which doctrine bears striking resemblance to Edwards’s post-conversion conception of happiness.⁸⁵

1.3.3.2 Reformation Happiness

The Protestant Reformation brings about a soteriological and Christocentric emphasis for the doctrine of Christian happiness. Girolamo Zanchi is paradigmatic, who, according to Muller, “emphasizes the blessed life that flows from God into those who receive Christ in faith to their justification, remission of sins, and peace of conscience.”⁸⁶ Christ and the gospel, especially the benefits of the gospel, are central to Reformation happiness. What God has done for sinners through the death and resurrection of Christ emerges as the most immediate source and object of Christian joy and happiness. The gospel-centric happiness of the Reformation, furthermore, leads to the identification of happiness as the evidence, and assurance, of salvation, as, according to McMahon, spiritual happiness is considered “an indication of God’s favor.”⁸⁷

⁸² Wieland, “Happiness: The Perfection of Man,” 675.

⁸³ Ibid, 675-76.

⁸⁴ Christina Van Dyke, “Aquinas’s Shiny Happy People: Perfect Happiness and the Limits of Human Nature,” *Oxford Studies in the Philosophy of Religion*, 6 (2014): 274, n.11.

⁸⁵ While Edwards’s account of the beatific enjoyment is undeniably rooted in Aquinas, Hans Boersma demonstrates several ways in which Edwards modifies the traditional medieval view, especially by making Christ the “consummate theophanic appearance of God.” Hans Boersma, “The “Grand Medium”: An Edwardsean Modification of Thomas Aquinas on the Beatific Vision,” *Modern Theology*, 33:2 (2017): 187.

⁸⁶ Muller, *PRRD3*, 382.

⁸⁷ McMahon, *Happiness*, 173. See also Potkay, *Story of Joy*, 73.

Notwithstanding elements of continuity with ancient and medieval thought, John Calvin's doctrine of happiness is grounded in union with God through the saving work of Christ. Calvin appreciates the joy and peace of a "good conscience" associated with gospel salvation,⁸⁸ however his version of happiness consists of more than the knowledge of sins forgiven. Happiness for Calvin is union with God, received through the gospel of grace. In the 1559 version of his *Institutes*, Calvin writes:

The ancient philosophers anxiously discussed the sovereign good...Yet none but Plato recognized man's highest good as union with God...Even on this earthly pilgrimage we know the sole and perfect happiness; but this happiness kindles our hearts more and more each day to desire it, until the full fruition of it shall satisfy us.⁸⁹

Union with God and the enjoyment of God is central to Calvin's conception of happiness, "the very summit" of which is "to enjoy the presence of God."⁹⁰ This happiness, furthermore, is not reserved solely for heaven, as Roberts writes, "Calvin approved Plato's recognition that the *summum bonum* consisted in one's happiness in eternal union with God, although thought...that the believer may obtain it to some extent in this life, also."⁹¹ While Calvin's teaching is similar to the medieval doctrine, it is thoroughly grounded in a Christocentric and redemptive historical perspective. Possessing Christ is the ultimate human happiness,⁹² and as Charles Partee observes, Calvin "criticizes Plato for not knowing that happiness depends on Christ's resurrection."⁹³ According to Partee, Calvin's happiness is not a "human achievement," but rather a "divine

⁸⁸ Heiko A. Oberman, "The Pursuit of Happiness," in *Humanity and Divinity in Renaissance and Reformation: Essays in Honor of Charles Trinkaus*, eds. John O'Malley et al. (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 252, 277.

⁸⁹ John Calvin, *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Vol. 2, III.25.2, ed. John T. McNeill (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1977), 988-89.

⁹⁰ Calvin, quoted by Alcorn, *Happiness*, 89.

⁹¹ Roberts, *Puritanism and the Pursuit of Happiness*, 87.

⁹² Ibid, 90.

⁹³ Charles Partee, *The Theology of John Calvin* (London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 174.

bestowal,” the “actuality of grace.”⁹⁴ As such, this happiness is enjoyed exclusively by the redeemed, as Calvin writes, “those who are under the curse of God enjoy not even the smallest particle of happiness.”⁹⁵ For Calvin, happiness depends wholly on Christ: “In Christ God offers happiness to replace our misery.”⁹⁶ Calvin, writes Muller, “describes blessedness as a gift of God, given only in Christ and in covenant.”⁹⁷

For Martin Luther, the gospel of grace is the source and object of the happiness, making faith the fundamental activity of happiness:

Faith is a work of God in us, which changes us and brings us to birth anew from God [cf. John 1]. It kills the old Adam, makes us completely different people...What a living, creative, active, powerful thing is faith!...[I]t is a living, unshakeable confidence in God's grace...This kind of trust in and knowledge of God's grace makes a person joyful [*frohlich*], confident, and gay [*lustig*] with regard to God and all creatures. This is what the Holy Spirit does by faith.⁹⁸

Luther's crucial emphasis is faith in God's grace, which produces joy and happiness. Notwithstanding the work of the Holy Spirit, happiness is understood as the enjoyment of faith in what God has done, rather than the beatific enjoyment of union with God. Thus, Charry's description of Reformation happiness as “relief from anxiety before God”⁹⁹ is fitting in the case of Luther, who preached the sermon, “Sin is pure unhappiness, forgiveness pure happiness.”¹⁰⁰ For Luther, it is through faith in the gospel that human beings “learn how to obtain an abundance of joy [Freude], happiness [Gluck], and salvation [Heil], both here and in eternity.”¹⁰¹ As Charry writes, Lutheran happiness is “enjoying gospel freedom from the law,” or “the elimination of anxiety and trepidation before God that we experience via the justification that

⁹⁴ Ibid, 177.

⁹⁵ Calvin, quoted by McMahon, *Happiness*, 169.

⁹⁶ Partee, *Theology of John Calvin*, 236.

⁹⁷ Muller, *PRRD3*, 372-73.

⁹⁸ Luther, quoted by McMahon, *Happiness*, 168.

⁹⁹ Charry, *God and the Art of Happiness*, 111.

¹⁰⁰ McMahon, *Happiness*, 166.

¹⁰¹ Luther, quoted by McMahon, *Happiness*, 171.

calms the emotions.”¹⁰² Indeed, for Luther, happiness is rooted in the person and work of Christ received through faith in the gospel, as he writes, “when I possess Him, I surely possess all; for he is pure righteousness, life and eternal blessedness.”¹⁰³

1.3.3.3 Puritan and Reformed Happiness

The Puritan and Reformed tradition demonstrates significant continuity with the Reformation and medieval versions of happiness. It also tends to conceive of happiness as grounded in the godly activity of the individual. Therefore, we observe all three categories of Christian happiness in Reformed divinity: the beatific enjoyment of happiness in God, happiness in what God has done through the gospel, and the happiness of godliness.

Contra Kitanov, *the beatific enjoyment of God* resurfaces after the Reformation during the Early Modern era in Puritan and Reformed theology, although not without controversy.¹⁰⁴ The high teleological status of practical virtue and godliness during the Enlightenment makes this primarily contemplative conception of happiness untenable to *philosophes* and theologians alike. Hobbes claims that, “the word of the Schoolmen *beatifical vision* is unintelligible,”¹⁰⁵ and Owen says most consider notions of the beatific vision as ideas “which they may safely be without knowledge of; for...they have no influence on Christian practice or duties of morality...but take the minds of men from more necessary duties.”¹⁰⁶ Indeed, the influential Ames eschews the notion of the happiness of contemplating God as ultimate *telos*, in favor of the

¹⁰² Charry, *God and the Art of Happiness*, 113.

¹⁰³ Luther, quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 372.

¹⁰⁴ Kitanov claims that doctrine of the beatific vision vanishes in the sixteenth century. Kitanov, *Beatific Enjoyment*, 255-56.

¹⁰⁵ Hobbes, *Leviathan*, edited by J.C.A. Gaskin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 42.

¹⁰⁶ Owen, quoted by Suzanne McDonald, “Beholding the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ: John Owen and the “Reforming” of the Beatific Vision,” in *The Ashgate Research Companion to John Owen’s Theology*, eds. Kelly M. Kapic and Mark Jones (New York: Routledge, 2016), 142.

more practical goal of “living to God.”¹⁰⁷ Relatedly, talk of the beatific happiness elicits caution from divines wary of religious enthusiasm, as with Puritan John Howe, who is, according to Martin Sutherland, “very cautious about this individualized ground for delight.”¹⁰⁸

However, notwithstanding the opposition, this version of happiness survives the Puritan era. Aquinas’s beatific version of happiness is applied at seventeenth century Harvard for the sake of opposing rival Epicurean and Stoic accounts, as student John Holyoke writes, “The ultimate happiness for man consists in the contemplation of God.”¹⁰⁹ The rise of Neoplatonism at Harvard also appears to cultivate conceptions of happiness in the tradition of the beatific vision. Theophilus Golius’s *Epitome Doctrinae Moralis* (1592), used extensively at Harvard, rejects Aristotle’s happiness of virtue in favor of the Platonic version:

The highest happiness for man is found in the contemplation of the Good, if by the Good we mean the idea of God. For human happiness does consist above all in the contemplation of God.¹¹⁰

Golius applies Plato’s contemplative framework to the happiness of the beatific vision, which is the “ultimate end of human activity,” in order to oppose the happiness of virtue. Eustache de Saint-Paul’s *Ethica* (1609), also studied at Harvard, promotes similar Neoplatonic versions of happiness, such as “delight in divine things” and the “intellectual love” of God,¹¹¹ and philosopher Adriaan Heereboord, studied closely by New England Puritans, teaches, “the highest happiness for man, in a formal sense, lies in the glorification of God,” which he describes in terms of the beatific contemplation, “the soul’s combined love and knowledge of God.”¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ Ames, *Marrow*, 78; Fiering, *Seventeenth Century Harvard*, 76.

¹⁰⁸ Martin Sutherland, “A Treatise of Delighting in God by John Howe (1630-1705),” in *The Devoted Life: An Invitation to the Puritan Classics*, eds. Kelly M. Kapic and Randall C. Gleason (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2004), 232.

¹⁰⁹ Fiering, *Seventeenth Century Harvard*, 75-76.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, 75.

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, 85.

¹¹² *Ibid*, 100.

Thomas Watson understands the beatific vision as “the enjoyment of God in the life to come,”¹¹³ consisting of the “contemplation and love of God.”¹¹⁴ Howe also reserves the beatific vision for the heaven in his *Blessednesse of the Righteous* (1668),¹¹⁵ however, in *Delighting in God* (1674) Howe promotes a Christocentric beatific enjoyment, or “delight,” consisting of the knowledge of God, “pleasedness” with God, and “satisfaction or repose of the soul,” caused by “God’s communication of himself” through the gospel, in the present life.¹¹⁶ Thus, for Howe, happiness is a Christocentric delight in the knowledge of God.¹¹⁷ Owen writes explicitly about the happiness of a Christocentric “beatifical vision,”¹¹⁸ which “enjoyment of God” is perfect in heaven, but initiated in this life,¹¹⁹ and consists of “seeing and knowing God...beholding the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”¹²⁰ Owen’s beatific blessedness, described variously as joy, delight, and complacency, begins in this life through “the mysterious communication of himself (Christ), and all the benefits of his mediation, unto the souls of them that do believe, to their present happiness and future eternal blessedness.”¹²¹

Several Reformed theologians embrace the doctrine of ‘possessing God,’ which appears to combine elements of ‘felicity’ as Muller has defined it, and the ‘happiness’ of the beatific enjoyment of God. Amandus Polanus includes the

¹¹³ Thomas Watson, *A Body of Divinity* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1957), 22.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 25.

¹¹⁵ Roberts, *Puritanism and the Pursuit of Happiness*, 88.

¹¹⁶ Sutherland, “A Treatise of Delighting in God,” 230. See also Roberts, who emphasizes the Christocentric “enjoyment of God” in Ralph Venning and other English Puritans. Roberts, *Puritanism and the Pursuit of Happiness*, 90-91.

¹¹⁷ Roberts, *Puritanism and the Pursuit of Happiness*, 97; Sutherland, “A Treatise of Delighting in God,” 229.

¹¹⁸ “Owen turns repeatedly to the concept of beholding the glory of God by faith now and by sight in heaven – and so, to the anticipation and consummation of the beatific vision.” McDonald, “Beholding the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ: John Owen and the “Reforming” of the Beatific Vision,” 142.

¹¹⁹ John Owen, “Meditations and Discourses on the Glory of Christ,” *The Works of John Owen*, Vol. I, ed. William H. Goold (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1965), 292-93.

¹²⁰ Ibid, 294.

¹²¹ Ibid, 360.

beatific vision under the rubric of happiness, which consists of: “Freedom from every evil and the possession of every truly good thing, which the rational creature possesses in God,” which are, “the vision of God, conformity with God, sufficiency in God, and a certain knowledge of his eternal goodness.”¹²²

Similarly, Edward Leigh writes, “The happiness of a man consists in enjoying himself by virtue of the possession of the greatest good, whereof he is capable, or which is all one, by enjoying the greatest good.”¹²³ Possession language typically assumes a particularly Christocentric character, as Roberts writes, “it is the knowledge of God and possession of Christ which constitute ultimate human happiness.”¹²⁴

Three important sources for Edwards, William Bates, Isaac Watts, and Thomas Shepherd, describe happiness in the tradition of the beatific enjoyment. Similar to Heereboord, these divines make the knowledge and love of God fundamental to happiness. William Bates, whose *Harmony of the Divine Attributes* (London, 1674) is included in Edwards’s book catalogue during the 1722-24 period,¹²⁵ writes therein, “Now the highest faculties in man are the understanding and will, and their happiness consists in union with God by knowledge and love.”¹²⁶ Likewise, Watts’s doctrine of “happiness,” or “true felicity,” consists of the knowledge and love of God, as his sermon series listed in Edwards’s catalogue during 1724, *The scale of blessedness; or, Blessed saints, blessed Savior, and blessed Trinity*, describes.¹²⁷

Nearness to God, is *the Foundation of a Creature’s Happiness*. This Truth appear’d in full Evidence, while we considered *the Three chief Ingredients of true Felicity*, (viz.) *The Contemplation* of the noblest

¹²² Amandus Polanus, *Syntagma*, Synopsis, libri I, translated by Dr. Wes Bredenhof. <http://yinkahdinay.wordpress.com/2009/12/22/the-synopsis-of-polanus-syntagma-1/>.

¹²³ Edward Leigh, quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 382.

¹²⁴ Roberts, *Puritanism and the Pursuit of Happiness*, 90.

¹²⁵ Edwards, *WJE* 26, 155. Brandon Withrow has argued for the influence of Bates on Edwards. Brandon G. Withrow, *Becoming Divine: Jonathan Edwards Incarnational Spirituality within the Christian Tradition* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 181.

¹²⁶ William Bates, *The Harmony of the Divine Attributes* (London: J. Darby, 1674), 10.

¹²⁷ Edwards, *WJE* 26, 120.

Object, to satisfy all the Powers of the Understanding; the *Love* of the Supreme Good, to answer the utmost Propensities of the Will; and the sweet and everlasting Sensation and Assurance of the Love of an almighty Friend...¹²⁸

Similarly, New England Puritan Thomas Shepard makes knowing and loving Christ the basis of the saints' happiness - and ultimate end - as Michael McGiffert comments:

Thus they ("true saints") manifested their "sanctification," that theological term defined by Shepard as the "work of the Spirit in the soul whereby the soul, beholding the glory of Christ and feeling his love, hereupon closeth with the whole will of Christ and seeketh to please him, as his happiness and utmost end."¹²⁹

As Shepard's doctrine reveals, Puritan and Reformed versions of happiness are eminently Christocentric, which is also manifested by the tradition's continuity with the Reformation's affinity for the *happiness of the gospel*.

As with the Reformers, the work of Christ and the benefits of the gospel are the means to happiness and assurance for Puritan and Reformed divines, which McMahon, Potkay, and Alec Ryrie each observe.¹³⁰ Puritan Samuel Rutherford writes, "I have neither tongue nor pen to express to you the happiness of such that are in Christ."¹³¹ The gospel and its benefits represent not only the means to happiness, but also the object of happiness and the assurance of salvation, as with Thomas Wright, who writes of the "secret joyes, which proceed from a good conscience grounded upon a confident hope of future salvation."¹³² While Howe express caution about the association of

¹²⁸ Isaac Watts, "The scale of blessedness; or, Blessed saints, blessed Savior, and blessed Trinity," in *Sermons on Various Subjects* (London, 1721), 376.

¹²⁹ Michael McGiffert, *God's Plot: Puritan Spirituality in Thomas Shepard's Cambridge*, ed. Michael McGiffert (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1994), 16. Edwards quotes Shepard more than any other writer in his *Religious Affections*. John E. Smith, "Editor's Introduction," *WJE* 2, 54.

¹³⁰ McMahon, *Happiness*, 173; Potkay, *Story of Joy*, 73; Alec Ryrie, *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 77.

¹³¹ Samuel Rutherford, quoted by Alcorn, *Happiness*, 23.

¹³² Thomas Wright, quoted by Roberts, *Puritanism and the Pursuit of Happiness*, 88.

happiness with assurance, most Puritans make happiness an evidence of true saving grace, as we have already seen with Shepard, who argues that true saints actively know and love Christ, who is their “happiness and utmost end.” This teaching, writes McGiffert, is meant to help parishioners “find out if they were “wrapped up” in the Covenant.”¹³³ As Richard Sibbes writes, Christ and the gospel are “the right object and the right way to felicity,” and are revealed “only to a true Christian.”¹³⁴

Question two of the *Heidelberg Catechism* (1563), used extensively in Puritan and Reformed circles, is also representative of this version of happiness, which is grounded in the knowledge of salvation:

What three things must you know *to live and die happily*?

Answer: Three things: First, how great my sins and misery are; second, how I am set free from all my sins and misery; third, how I am to thank God for such a deliverance.¹³⁵

Similarly, Roberts writes that for Robert Bolton, “True happiness is rooted...in the ‘righteousness of faith and sanctification’ imputed by grace to the believer in Christ through the Holy Spirit.” Thus, for Bolton, true happiness is enjoyed not, as he writes, by the “formalist” on the basis of religious piety, but by the true Christian through the gospel of grace.¹³⁶

The assurance of salvation, observes Roberts, “is the means to happiness” in four ways in Puritan divinity, each relating to the benefits of the gospel. First, as with Luther, happiness comes through freedom from the condemnation of the Law. Second, happiness is produced by being freed from

¹³³ McGiffert, *God’s Plot*, 16.

¹³⁴ Richard Sibbes, quoted by Alcorn, *Happiness*, 22.

¹³⁵ *Heidelberg Catechism: 450th Anniversary Edition* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 2013) (emphasis added).

¹³⁶ S. Bryn Roberts, “‘Milk and Honey’: Puritan Happiness in the Writings of Robert Bolton, John Norden and Francis Rous,” in *Puritanism and Emotion in the Early Modern World*, eds. Alec Ryrie and Tom Schwanda (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 105-6.

the power of sin, the enemy of happiness. Third, the believer is happy in the assurance that all things work for the good and ultimate happiness of the believer. Fourth, “happiness found in God” comes by obedience to his commands, or godliness.¹³⁷

The *happiness of godliness* is the third prominent category of happiness expressed in Puritan and Reformed divinity. Roberts has even argued that for the Puritans, “it was through godliness that one gained the greatest happiness,”¹³⁸ claiming, “the puritan experience” should be understood as “the pursuit and enjoyment of happiness through godliness.”¹³⁹ As Ralph Venning writes:

This will be the Conclusion of the whole matter, Feare God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole...content and Happinesse of man, this all that is profitable to man...we may as well find ease in hell, as finde Happiness any other way.¹⁴⁰

Potkay observes that as the eighteenth century unfolds, Christian authors increasingly emphasize “the joy of doing good.”¹⁴¹ Schneewind explains that during the Enlightenment, efforts to frame ethics and happiness in terms of Christian theology produce versions of happiness that correlate to the explicit commands of God, rather than ‘virtue’ as defined by the philosophers,¹⁴² and relatedly, religious writers are observed “treating virtues as the habits of following the rules through which we apply the divine command to maximize happiness.”¹⁴³

Another factor during the Early Modern era is the legacy of Aristotle’s ethics and the integration of Stoicism with the Christian faith, whereby the happiness of virtue is applied to biblical obedience. According to Kraye, “the most common scheme” of Protestant ethical studies during the seventeenth

¹³⁷ Roberts, *Puritanism and the Pursuit of Happiness*, 88.

¹³⁸ Ibid, 93.

¹³⁹ Ibid, 100.

¹⁴⁰ Ralph Venning, quoted by Roberts, *Puritanism and the Pursuit of Happiness*, 95.

¹⁴¹ Potkay, *The Story of Joy*, 109-110.

¹⁴² Schneewind, *Invention of Autonomy*, 286-89.

¹⁴³ Ibid, 288.

century “divided ethics into two parts: *eudaimonologia*, dealing with happiness, the goal of ethics; and *aretologia*, dealing with virtue, the means to reach that goal,” citing Heereboord as a prime example.¹⁴⁴ Therefore, in most Protestant circles, whether latitudinarian or Puritan, virtue, i.e. godly obedience, is recommended as a primary path to happiness.

Indeed, the happiness of virtue is taught at Harvard throughout the seventeenth and into the eighteenth century, exemplified by the 1653 commencement speech, “*Ad beatitudinem via regia est virtus*” (“virtue is the royal road to happiness”).¹⁴⁵ Charles Morton, “America’s first professional philosopher,”¹⁴⁶ represents an influential proponent of this Aristotelian doctrine of happiness during the late-seventeenth century at Harvard: “Happyness,” he writes, is “an operation of the Rationall Soul, according to the most perfect virtue, in the most Perfect life.”¹⁴⁷ Morton makes virtue the source of “felicity,” writing, “nearer to perfect virtue, the nearer to felicity [that] is perfect.”¹⁴⁸ Virtue is also central to the influential Henry More’s conception of happiness, which is taught at Harvard as the “pleasure one feels when one is virtuous or has virtue.”¹⁴⁹ Roberts argues, in fact, that the Neoplatonism of Henry More and other the Cambridge Platonists that influences many English Puritans toward conceiving of virtue as the primary means to happiness.¹⁵⁰

Fiering argues that the Ramist “Richardson-Ames theory of *technologia*” made the Aristotelian concept *eupraxia*, or “well acting,” the “end or purpose of the arts” in Puritan circles,¹⁵¹ and it is not surprising that conceptions of happiness followed suit. Harvard student Samuel Shepard comments on the implications of *eupraxia*, concluding, “all of nature, including man, can attain to

¹⁴⁴ Kraye, “Conceptions of Moral Philosophy,” 1284-85.

¹⁴⁵ Fiering, *Seventeenth Century Harvard*, 75.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 207.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 228.

¹⁴⁸ Charles Morton, quoted by Fiering, *Seventeenth Century Harvard*, 228.

¹⁴⁹ Fiering, *Seventeenth Century Harvard*, 262.

¹⁵⁰ Roberts, *Puritanism and the Pursuit of Happiness*, 95.

¹⁵¹ Fiering, *Seventeenth Century Harvard*, 45.

“happiness” only through well-acting.”¹⁵² Roberts argues that Venning’s theology is influenced by the moral philosophy he studied, that his doctrine of godly happiness is “rooted directly in Aristotle.”¹⁵³ Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where Venning and many Puritans were educated, promoted “the association between godliness and temporal happiness,” according to Roberts, leading Venning and fellow Puritans to make the pursuit of happiness through godly living, “the unifying principle” of theology.¹⁵⁴

However, notwithstanding its broad appeal, the happiness of godly virtue is rejected by some, most notably the influential William Ames. According to Kraye, it was Ames’s goal to “replace Aristotelian manuals” in order to protect students from “such impious doctrines as the conviction that happiness began and ended with man and could be achieved by purely human means.”¹⁵⁵ Seeking to “correct a misleading point often made in Reformed theology,” Ames opens his *Marrow of Theology*: “Theology is the doctrine or teaching of *living* to God.” Eusden comments, “*Living* to God, says Ames, means *living rightly*; it does *not mean living blessedly*.”¹⁵⁶ Thus, Ames creates a dichotomy between happiness and obedience, adamant to avoid making happiness the ultimate goal of the Christian life at the expense of obedience and divine glory. Ames eschews speaking at all about the *happiness* of “right living,” in order to promote the notion that, “What chiefly and finally ought to be striven for is *not happiness* which has to do with our own pleasure, but *goodness which looks to God’s glory*.”¹⁵⁷

Therefore, Puritan and Reformed divinity reveals three primary versions of spiritual happiness: the beatific enjoyment of God, the happiness of the gospel and assurance, and the happiness of godliness. Understanding these conceptions of happiness helps us comprehend the significance of Edwards’s

¹⁵² Ibid, 46.

¹⁵³ Roberts, *Puritanism and the Pursuit of Happiness*, 94.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, 40.

¹⁵⁵ Kraye, “Conceptions of Moral Philosophy,” 1299.

¹⁵⁶ Eusden, *Marrow*, 47(emphasis added).

¹⁵⁷ Ames, *Marrow*, 78.

early spiritual experience, which, as I will discuss, is particularly marked by a dramatic shift in his experience and view of happiness whereby he realizes a 'new' happiness, the beatific enjoyment of God, which I suggest, motivates and informs his teleological vision and "end of creation" project.

1.4 A New Happiness in the *Personal Narrative*

Several of Edwards's personal, autobiographical texts support the notion that the young theologian's "dominant experience" is, as Edwards describes it in his *Personal Narrative*, an "exceedingly different kind" of spiritual happiness.¹⁵⁸ What impacts Edwards's heart and mind during the years 1721-23 is a conversion experience that provides him with a completely new category of happiness, a truly *spiritual* happiness that he initially describes as a "sweet delight in God."¹⁵⁹ Thus, Edwards's early religious experience is marked by a rigorously theocentric happiness in the tradition of the beatific vision that profoundly impacts Edwards's life and thought.

Edwards's *Personal Narrative*, likely written in 1740,¹⁶⁰ describes the delight and happiness of his conversion episode:

The first that I remember that ever I found anything of that sort of *inward, sweet delight in God* and divine things, that I have lived much in since, was on reading those words, 1 Timothy 1:17, "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever, Amen." As I read the words, there came into my soul, and was as it were diffused through it, a sense of the glory of the divine being; a new sense, quite different from anything I ever experienced before. Never any words of Scripture seemed to me as these words did.

*I thought with myself, how excellent a Being that was; and how happy I should be, if I might enjoy that God, and be wrapt up to God in heaven, and be as it were swallowed up in him. I kept saying, and as it were singing over these words of Scripture to myself; and went to prayer, to pray to God that I might enjoy him.*¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ Edwards, *Personal Narrative*, WJE 16, 794-95.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, 792-93.

¹⁶⁰ George S. Claghorn, "Introduction," WJE 16, 747.

¹⁶¹ Edwards, *Personal Narrative*, WJE 16, 792-93 (emphasis added).

Edwards's conversion is particularly marked by the discovery of a "sweet delight in God" that convinces Edwards that the enjoyment of God would mean nothing less than abundant *happiness*: "how happy should I be, if I might enjoy that God." In addition to demonstrating that for Edwards, such terms as delight, happiness, and enjoyment are interrelated and overlap, this text makes it quite plain that what Edwards considers central to his conversion is "delight" in God, and a newfound desire to be "happy" in the enjoyment of *God himself*. Furthermore, it is significant that Edwards turns to prayer in order to pursue the enjoyment of God. Edwards realises that it is impossible for this newfound delight to be manufactured by the creature; it must come from God the Creator. God is the object and source of this happiness, which consists solely in the enjoyment of God himself, and can come solely from God himself. Thus, at his conversion, Edwards for the first time *experiences* the beatific enjoyment of God, a doctrine he had undoubtedly learned through his Puritan heritage.

The context of the above passage within the *Personal Narrative* also helps highlight the centrality of delight and happiness in Edwards's conversion. Earlier in the text, Edwards has been discussing his change of attitude toward the doctrine of God's sovereignty,¹⁶² but while many commentators use this text to make a favorable view of divine sovereignty the central item of Edwards's conversion, it is crucial to see that Edwards does not stop there. As we read on, it becomes clear that the story Edwards is telling is a story about *delight* in the God who is sovereign, rather than God's sovereignty *per se*:

But I have oftentimes since that first conviction, had quite another kind of sense of God's sovereignty, than I had then. I have often since, *not only had a conviction, but a delightful conviction*. The doctrine of God's sovereignty has very often appeared, *an exceeding pleasant, bright and sweet doctrine* to me: and absolute sovereignty is what I love to ascribe to God. But my first conviction was not with this. *The first that I*

¹⁶² Ibid, 792-93: "It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me. But I remember the time very well, when I seemed to be convinced, and fully satisfied, as to this sovereignty of God, and his justice in thus eternally disposing of men, according to his sovereign pleasure."

*remember that ever I found anything of that sort of inward, sweet delight in God and divine things...*¹⁶³

The point Edwards makes is that his doctrinal conviction about God's sovereignty is accompanied for the first time by *delight*; it is "delightful conviction" in the doctrine, and it represents his "first" experience of *delight in God himself*, as he writes, it is a "sweet delight in God and divine things." Thus, the "dominant experience" of Edwards's conversion is not merely a new perspective on divine sovereignty, or even divine beauty or glory, but rather a new spiritual happiness consisting of a "sweet delight in God."

Edwards makes it plain that this new delight is entirely distinct from his past experience, which appears to fall generally into the category of the happiness of godliness, or "religion." At the very outset of the *Narrative*, Edwards sets up the contrast by explaining the folly of his previous "delight in religion." As a young boy, Edwards had experienced seasons of intense pleasure and delight, yet, as he writes, it was "I know not what kind of delight in religion":

My mind was much engaged in it, and had much *self-righteous pleasure*; and *it was my delight to abound in religious duties*...And I am ready to think, many are deceived with such affections, and such a kind of delight, as I then had in religion, and mistake it for grace.¹⁶⁴

The source of Edwards's delight as a youth was not God, but rather, "religious duties," meaning the object of his delight was not God, but *himself*, as it was a "self-righteous pleasure" achieved by his own works. Thus, the *Narrative* is a tale of two delights, one based on religious activity and "self-righteous pleasure," and the other, a truly *spiritual* delight, with *God* and his excellency as both object and source, discovered for the first time at Edwards's conversion. Indeed, it is this same God-centered joy and delight that soon after impresses Edwards about his future bride. Of Sarah Pierpont, he writes in 1723, God "fills her mind

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid, 790-91 (emphasis added).

with exceeding sweet delight,” and she is “ravished with his love, favor, and delight...always full of joy and pleasure.”¹⁶⁵

Therefore, notwithstanding the fact that the *Personal Narrative* is written about twenty years after Edwards’s 1721 conversion,¹⁶⁶ both the content and the structure of the text indicate that the “dominant experience” of Edwards’s conversion is the discovery of a truly theocentric and spiritual happiness that consists of a “sweet delight” in the beatific enjoyment of God. Indeed, this profound and transformative experience begins to convince Edwards that this happiness in God is the ultimate *telos* of human existence, which subsequently motivates him to develop and prove his teleology of happiness in his *Miscellanies* notebook.

1.5 A New Happiness in the Early Sermons

Edwards’s early sermons not only reveal an intense concern for the theme of happiness, they demonstrate the transition to the new spiritual happiness Edwards discovers at his conversion. While it is true that, as Marsden laments, “we do not have much of a written record of the first year and a half of this intense time,”¹⁶⁷ we are fortunate to have one pre-conversion sermon that helps demonstrate the development of Edwards’s conception of happiness. When compared with the post-conversion sermons of the subsequent two years, Edwards’s sermon *Christian Happiness* reveals the shift I have been describing, as the happiness it describes is defined primarily in terms of godliness, and the gospel, rather than delight in God himself.

Christian Happiness, Edwards’s earliest extant sermon, is composed before his conversion during the fall or winter of 1720-21,¹⁶⁸ likely for licensure

¹⁶⁵ Edwards, “On Sarah Pierpont,” *WJE* 16, 789-90.

¹⁶⁶ Edwards’s retrospective interpretation of his new happiness (twenty years later) in fact supports my argument that this experience causes a crucial and lasting impression.

¹⁶⁷ Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 46.

¹⁶⁸ Wilson H. Kimnach, “Appendix: Dated Batches of Sermons Dating by Thomas A. Schafer,” *WJE* 10, 645. See also Bombaro, *Jonathan Edwards’ Vision of Reality*, 34.

or perhaps an academic assignment at Yale.¹⁶⁹ The exposition of Isaiah 3:10, “Say unto the righteous, it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings,” manifests each of the three categories of Puritan and Reformed happiness, but Edwards’s emphasis falls almost exclusively on the happiness of godliness and the gospel, rather than the beatific enjoyment of God. The source of happiness in this pre-conversion sermon is primarily the knowledge of the gospel and its benefits, and especially the life of godliness, which is reflected in its doctrinal statement: “A *good* man is a happy man, whatever his outward circumstances are,” and Edwards’s repeated exhortation to, for the sake of happiness, “*walk according [to] the rules of religion and godliness.*”¹⁷⁰ The benefits of the gospel are also in view, as happiness also comes from the comfort of knowing God’s good providence and the promise of his saving work in the face of trials. The Christian, Edwards proclaims:

may triumph over them all knowing this... that all things shall surely work out for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory...remembering God’s promise that all things shall surely work together for his good, and nothing shall offend...How happy, then, must the condition of such a man be!¹⁷¹

Of gospel benefits, such as sins forgiven and the assurance of God’s love and sanctifying work, Edwards writes: “How great a pleasure and satisfaction it must be to him to think of it....The reflection on these things affords such a peace and pleasantness to the mind...”¹⁷² Happiness, therefore, derives in large part from the knowledge of the gospel.

However, Edwards most frequently emphasizes the notion that happiness is “the fruit of their doings,” achieved by goodness and Christian virtue:

The greater your goodness, the greater your comfort will be whilst here;
the firmer your faith is, the stronger your hope; the more live and

¹⁶⁹ Kimnach, *WJE* 10, 294.

¹⁷⁰ Edwards, *Christian Happiness*, *WJE* 10, 296, 303, 306 (emphasis added).

¹⁷¹ *Ibid*, 298-99.

¹⁷² *Ibid*, 299-300.

vigorous your grace, the more ardent your love, the more comfort,
pleasure and satisfaction will you enjoy in this life.¹⁷³

Therefore, Kimnach is on the mark to comment that this sermon “advocates a traditional Christian piety as the key to true happiness.”¹⁷⁴ Reminiscent of the “self-righteous pleasure” of his adolescence, piety and godliness are the source of happiness, rather than God himself. It is no surprise that Elizabeth Agnew Cochran’s heavy reliance on this sermon leads her to claim that Edwards’s “account of happiness is strikingly similar to the position of the Roman Stoics...”¹⁷⁵ Indeed, Edwards devotes an entire section to the happiness of Christian obedience, or “duty”:

Hence learn the great goodness of God in joining so great a happiness to our duty....the thing required of us shall not only be easy but a pleasure and delight, even in the very doing of it.¹⁷⁶

Therefore, notwithstanding the gospel happiness present in this sermon, the majority of the text promotes the happiness of virtue, or godliness, and religion. The source of happiness is not the knowledge and love of *God*, but rather, “religion and godliness,” as he concludes with the following exhortations for the sake of happiness, first, “To the ungodly: to forsake his wickedness and to walk in the ways of religion,” and second, “Is to the godly to go on and persevere and make progress in the ways of religion and godliness.”¹⁷⁷

Admittedly, there is one line of *Christian Happiness* that resembles the beatific enjoyment of God, or “Christ.” The “pleasures...of contemplating his beauties, excellencies, and glories,” is an idea that is included, however it is just one in a list of “pleasures that are worthy of so noble a creature as a man” that is

¹⁷³ Ibid, 306.

¹⁷⁴ Kimnach, *WJE* 10, 294.

¹⁷⁵ Elizabeth Agnew Cochran, *Receptive Human Virtues: A New Reading of Jonathan Edwards’s Ethics* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011), 51.

¹⁷⁶ Edwards, *Christian Happiness*, *WJE* 10, 304. Notice the overlapping nature of Edwards’s happiness terminology. Happiness appears to be synonymous with, or at least consisting of, both pleasure and delight.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, 305, 306.

clearly framed by Edwards's primary emphasis, godliness. At the start, Edwards highlights, "The pleasures of loving and obeying," and in conclusion, "the pleasure that results from the doing of our duty, in acting worthily and excellently."¹⁷⁸ Therefore, Edwards is clearly aware of the tradition of the beatific enjoyment, yet he nevertheless minimizes it, as it receives only the slightest mention in this pre-conversion sermon. Why this is the case is worth considering. Of course, Edwards's lack of *experience* of the beatific enjoyment of God is my main point. However, it also appears that Edwards imagines the beatific enjoyment as strictly reserved for the afterlife, or heaven. He explains at the start that the happiness he will speak of is not perfect happiness, "to be enjoyed only in the after life," but rather, "it is sufficient in our sense to make a man happy [if] his condition be very excellent, desirable and joyful."¹⁷⁹ This sermon's neglect of the beatific enjoyment is, therefore, due in part to this doctrinal position, which is of course *not* necessarily unrelated to Edwards's lack of experience. Secondly, the beatific contemplation of God Edwards imagines is strictly Christocentric, with a particular emphasis on *the work of Christ*. Edwards does not refer to contemplating the excellency and glory of God, but of "Jesus Christ," whom, he writes, we have the "pleasure of trusting in."¹⁸⁰ The contemplation of God Edwards has in mind is the knowledge of what Christ has done through the gospel, i.e. gospel happiness:

And how joyful and gladsome must the thoughts of Jesus Christ be to him, to think with how great a love Christ has loved him, to lay down His life and suffer the most bitter torments for his sake...¹⁸¹

Therefore, before his conversion, Edwards conceives of Christian happiness almost exclusively in terms of the gospel, and godliness, each typical of the Puritan and Reformed tradition. Furthermore, it appears that at this stage Edwards's teleology is also associated with godliness, rather than happiness, in

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, 305-6.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid, 297.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid, 305.

¹⁸¹ Ibid, 299-300.

the tradition of William Ames, as he states, “the end” of the creature’s existence is “glorifying God and doing good to his fellow creatures.”¹⁸² Recall that Ames’s teleology makes “the glory of God” an eminently practical doctrine, as Eusden describes it:

In living rightly to God...the active Calvinist life – the acceptance of a rule of life, the honoring of God through ecclesiastical communal responsibilities, the serving of the neighbor’s need, and an upright personal conduct.¹⁸³

Recall as well, Mather’s *Bonifactus*, which emphasizes this practical Christian *telos*, stating, “the great end of human life” is “to do good.”¹⁸⁴ Thus, Edwards’s pre-conversion conception of happiness, and teleology, centers on Christian piety, godliness, and religion, rather than the happiness of the beatific enjoyment of God.

However, Edwards’s perspective on Christian happiness and his view of Christian teleology change dramatically at his conversion, when he discovers for the first time, “that sort of inward, sweet delight in God and divine things,” as he describes it:

...a sense of the glory of the divine being; a new sense, quite different from anything I ever experienced before...I thought with myself, how excellent a Being that was; and how happy I should be, if I might enjoy that God...¹⁸⁵

The happiness of religious piety and godly obedience, and even, in a sense, gospel salvation, become secondary to Edwards once he experiences the delight and happiness of the beatific enjoyment of God himself. In the *Narrative*, Edwards describes these strictly theocentric delights as being “of an exceedingly different kind,” even “totally of another kind.” They begin at Edwards’s

¹⁸² Ibid, 300.

¹⁸³ Eusden, *Marrow*, 48.

¹⁸⁴ Holifield, *Theology in America*, 64.

¹⁸⁵ Edwards, *Personal Narrative*, WJE 16, 792-93.

conversion and continue for over a year, and even escalate during his first pastorate in New York during 1722-23:

The delights which I now felt in things of religion, were of an exceeding different kind from those forementioned, that I had when I was a boy. They were totally of another kind...They were a more inward, pure, soul-animating and refreshing nature. Those former delights, never reached the heart; and did not rise from any sight of the divine excellency or the things of God...My sense of divine things seemed gradually to increase, til I went to preach in New York; which was about a year and a half after they began. While I was there, I felt them, very sensibly, in a much higher degree, than I had done before.¹⁸⁶

Several of Edwards's *post*-conversion sermons from this period demonstrate this shift in Edwards's conception of happiness. *The Value of Salvation*, preached during the spring or summer of 1722,¹⁸⁷ explains the "value" of salvation exclusively in terms of happiness in God:

The salvation of the soul is of inestimable worth and value because the happiness that will be enjoyed by every saved soul will be inestimable: first, because the saved soul shall be delivered from all evil; secondly, shall be brought to the enjoyment of all good; thirdly, this happiness shall be eternal.¹⁸⁸

Happiness for the post-conversion Edwards is of "inestimable" value, and consists of the enjoyment of God. Salvation is of "inestimable worth and value" because the value of the happiness it provides is inestimable. Happiness in this sermon is based not on human goodness, nor even the goodness of the gospel, but the enjoyment of "all" good, particularly the *summum bonum*, God himself. Happiness is not defined, as it is in *Christian Happiness*, on the basis of personal salvation benefits and godliness, but rather, on the basis of enjoying *the good*, i.e. God. Edwards describes happiness in these terms in another sermon from the same year: "If you find God, you will find complete and

¹⁸⁶ Ibid, 794-95.

¹⁸⁷ Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 521, n. 5.

¹⁸⁸ Edwards, *The Value of Salvation*, WJE 10, 322.

everlasting happiness, resulting from this deliverance from all evil, and the perfect enjoyment of this good.”¹⁸⁹

Since his conversion, Edwards has come to experience and understand the “chief thing,” which is, he proclaims in *The Value of Salvation*, “the Beatifical Vision of God: *that* is the tip of happiness!”¹⁹⁰ Just one year prior, Edwards had explicitly avoided speaking of the beatific enjoyment of God in *Christian Happiness*,¹⁹¹ but at this stage, Edwards states that the beatific vision is the peak of human happiness:

To see a God of infinite glory and majesty face to face...the vision and fruition of God will be so intimate and clear as to transform the soul into the likeness of God....they shall see the man Christ Jesus, and even Jehovah himself, the Eternal Three in One, and shall be intimately united to him, and this happiness of theirs shall endure as long as God endures. How precious, then, must the salvation of that soul be in whose salvation is so much happiness.¹⁹²

Admittedly, Edwards is speaking about the happiness of heaven, but he does not restrict the beatific enjoyment to the afterlife. Rather, it is to be enjoyed during the earthly existence, albeit to lesser degree, as Edwards writes in another sermon from this period:

[T]he godly man lives truly, internally, the merriest and most cheerful life. But this is nothing to what comes after. *'Tis true, 'tis the same sort of happiness that is enjoyed in heaven, but it is but a drop of that ocean,* but only some few drops of those whole rivers of pleasure, that falls from heaven upon the sanctified soul.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁹ Edwards, *Fragment: Application On Seeking God*, WJE 10, 383.

¹⁹⁰ Edwards, *The Value of Salvation*, WJE 10, 324.

¹⁹¹ “And lastly, from the joyful hope and assured expectation of the enjoyment of the completion of happiness eternally hereafter, to pretend to describe the excellence, the greatness, or duration of the happiness of heaven, by the most artful composition of words, would be but to darken and cloud it. Edwards, *Christian Happiness*, 300.

¹⁹² Edwards, *The Value of Salvation*, WJE 10, 324-25.

¹⁹³ Edwards, *Fragment: Application On Seeking God*, WJE 10, 384. Another sermon from this period implies a “measure” of the heavenly beatific enjoyment on earth: “You are now in some measure sanctified, and have the image of God upon your souls, but hereafter, when God shall receive you, his dear child, into his arms, and shall admit you to the perfect enjoyment of him as your portion, you will be entirely transformed into his likeness, for you shall see him as he is.” Edwards, *God’s Excellencies*, WJE 10, 435.

Therefore, the happiness of the beatific vision is to be enjoyed on earth, as with Owen's doctrine. It is different in degree, but not in kind. Thus, the new happiness experienced by Edwards that makes God himself the object and source in the tradition of the beatific vision, the contemplation and enjoyment of God, emerges within the post-conversion sermons of 1722.

Edwards can be observed explicitly shifting away from the happiness of the gospel *per se*, and of godliness, in a sermon written in the summer of 1722, *Glorious Grace*, which Marsden highlights as particularly characteristic of this period of newfound joy and "enthusiasm."¹⁹⁴ Edwards, in *Glorious Grace*, exposes his transition away from the happiness of "religion and godliness" toward a conception of happiness that can only be received as gift of gospel grace:

God has given even fallen man such a gift, that *He has left nothing for man to do that he may be happy, but only to receive what is given him...* God offers man eternal happiness upon far more gracious terms since he is fallen than before; *before, he was to do something himself for his happiness; he was to obey the law: but since he is fallen, God offers to save him for nothing, only if he will receive salvation as it is offered; that is, freely through Christ, by faith in him.*¹⁹⁵

Edwards is explicit that happiness cannot be achieved by human effort, but rather, can only be received through Christ and the gospel as a gift. The ultimate goal of the gospel is not "doing good to others" for the glory of God, as was his former conception, but rather, *happiness*: "Twas only that we might be happy," he writes of the work of Christ on the cross.¹⁹⁶ Happiness, Edwards has come to realize, is a gift from God, strictly theocentric, and the *telos* of Christ's saving work. Happiness is not foundationally based on the goodness of the creature, nor even, the goodness of the gospel, which he now conceives of as the means to, rather than the object of, spiritual happiness. The sole object and

¹⁹⁴ Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 521, n5, 46.

¹⁹⁵ Edwards, *Glorious Grace*, *WJE* 10, 394 (emphasis added).

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

source of happiness is the excellency of God himself, as Edwards writes in another sermon from this same period:

To all true Christians: you have heard what a superlatively excellent being your God is. His excellencies are all matter of joy and comfort to you; you may sit and meditate upon them with pleasure and delight.¹⁹⁷

1.6 A New Happiness in the Early Personal Writings

The development of Edwards's conception of happiness toward a more purely theocentric conception - and as ultimate *telos* - can also be observed in his personal writings from this period he describes in the following way: "...in some respects I was a far better Christian, for two to three years after my first conversion, than I am now; and lived in a more full and constant delight and pleasure."¹⁹⁸ In fact, Edwards describes his "thirst" and "burning desire to be in everything a complete Christian," to be "conformed to *the blessed image of Christ*."¹⁹⁹

Two early *Resolutions* reveal Edwards's new pursuit of happiness in God, as well as his new conception of Christian teleology. Resolution No. 1, from the fall of 1722, reads: "Resolved, that I will do whatsoever I think to be most to God's glory, *and my own good, profit and pleasure*..."²⁰⁰ One year prior, in his sermon *Christian Happiness*, Edwards had described the ultimate Christian *telos* as, "glorifying God *and doing good to his fellow creatures*."²⁰¹ Thus, by 1722, Edwards is unashamed to name his "own good, profit, and pleasure," i.e. his happiness, rather than "doing good" to others, the essential God-glorifying component of his teleology. Accordingly, Edwards soon after resolves:

¹⁹⁷ Edwards, *God's Excellencies*, WJE 10, 434.

¹⁹⁸ Edwards, *Personal Narrative*, WJE 16, 803.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, 795.

²⁰⁰ Edwards, *Resolutions*, WJE 16, 753 (emphasis added).

²⁰¹ Edwards, *Christian Happiness*, WJE 10, 300 (emphasis added).

to endeavor to obtain for myself (*as much happiness, in the other world*) as I possibly can, with all the power, might, vigor, and vehemence, yea violence, I am capable of, or can bring myself to exert, in any way that can be thought of.²⁰²

Having become convinced of the centrality of a truly theocentric happiness for the spiritual life of the Christian, Edwards begins to comprehend spiritual happiness as ultimate *telos*, and is thus resolved to pursue it with his every resource.

Edwards's *Resolution* No. 45 reads, "Resolved, never to allow any pleasure or grief, joy or sorrow, nor any affection at all, nor any degree of affection, nor any circumstance relating to it, but what helps religion. Jan. 12 and 13, 1723."²⁰³ Evidence that what he means by "religion" in No. 45 is the happiness of his delight in God is found in his *Diary* from earlier that day: "I have this morning told him, that I did take him for my whole portion and felicity, looking on nothing else as any part of my happiness."²⁰⁴ Furthermore, just two days prior on Jan. 10, 1723, Edwards bemoans in his *Diary* his envy of the worldly prosperity and happiness of others, concluding "always to rejoice in everyone's prosperity, and to expect for myself no happiness of that nature as long as I live; but depend upon afflictions, *and betake myself entirely to another happiness*."²⁰⁵ Edwards has come to experience and conceive of the Christian life as a pilgrimage to the ultimate *telos* of joy and delight of happiness in God, as he describes in his *Diary* upon his return home from New York:

Wednesday, May 1 (1723) Forenoon. Last night I came home, after my melancholy parting from New York....Lord, grant that from hence I may learn to withdraw my thoughts, affections, desires and expectations, entirely from the world, and may fix them upon the heavenly state; where there is fullness of joy; where reigns heavenly, sweet, calm, and delightful love without alloy....How sweetly will the mutual lovers join together to sing the praises of God and the Lamb! How full it will fill us

²⁰² Edwards, *Resolutions*, WJE 16, 754 (emphasis added).

²⁰³ Ibid, 756.

²⁰⁴ Edwards, *Diary*, WJE 16, 762.

²⁰⁵ Ibid, 761.

with joy to think, this enjoyment, these sweet exercises, will never cease or come to an end, but will last to all eternity.²⁰⁶

Edwards's *Diary* and recorded *Resolutions*, therefore, also reveal the new happiness of Edwards's post-conversion spirituality, and emerging teleology. Edwards comes to experience what is from his perspective, true and ultimate Christian happiness. This happiness is strictly theocentric; its object and source is God himself. It is not the happiness of godliness, nor even the gospel *per se*. True happiness is the beatific enjoyment of God himself, consisting of a "sweet delight in God." It cannot be achieved by human effort, but is rather, received from God through the gospel of grace as a gift, and it is the ultimate goal of the gospel, and thus, creation itself, which idea Edwards subsequently seeks to articulate and prove in his *Miscellanies* notebook, as the next chapter will demonstrate.

1.7 Conclusion

Jonathan Edwards's *Personal Narrative*, early personal writings and early sermons demonstrate that a new and truly theocentric happiness in the tradition of the beatific vision becomes the "dominant experience" of Edwards's spiritual life during the years 1721-23. Before his conversion, the benefits of the gospel, religious piety, and godly obedience are the primary sources of Christian happiness for Edwards, however, at his conversion, Edwards comes to experience a delight "of an exceedingly different kind," the happiness of the beatific enjoyment of God. Scholars agree that Edwards's early religious experience profoundly impacts his thinking. God's sovereignty, beauty, and glory are indeed crucial elements of Edwards's early theological development, however, the perspective that has been largely overlooked is Edwards's groundbreaking discovery of a new happiness in God, from which emerges an intense concern to prove this theocentric spiritual happiness as ultimate *telos*. While, as we have already seen, hints of this teleological conviction surface in

²⁰⁶ Ibid, 768.

the early sermons and personal writings, Edwards's explicit efforts to articulate and prove his teleology of happiness are subsequently recorded in the *Miscellanies* notebook. These philosophical and theological writings, aimed at proving his teleology of happiness, represent the intellectual development that flows out of the experiential development described in this chapter. Having become convinced that the beatific enjoyment of God is the supreme and ultimate Christian experience, Edwards is likewise motivated to prove that this happiness is the ultimate God-glorifying *telos* of all creation, which development I will describe in the next chapter.

Chapter 2: Teleology: “Happiness is the End of the Creation”

2.1 Introduction

Following his conversion and profound early experiences of spiritual happiness, Jonathan Edwards sets himself to prove happiness as ultimate *telos* during 1722-23. As Schafer writes of this period, “The happiness of a holy life, which was also a pervasive motif in the New York sermons, led Edwards to write a series of entries on happiness as God’s end in creating the world.”¹ A comprehensive understanding of Edward’s efforts to prove that “happiness is the end of the creation” is essential to our thesis, as it will help correct the misperception that this stage of development is juvenile and temporary, and show that, on the contrary, Edwards’s teleology of happiness is foundational to his later development. As both the content and the context of Edwards’s writings illuminate this point, the present chapter will demonstrate both the way that Edwards proves happiness as “the end of the creation,” and why, polemically, he takes up his pen to prove his point.

Edwards arrives at his settled conviction, “the end of man’s creation must needs be happiness” upon the completion of Miscellanies No. 87, “Happiness,” written toward the end of 1723:

HAPPINESS. ’Tis evident that the end of man’s creation must needs be happiness, from the motive of God’s creating the world, which could be nothing else but his goodness.²

Edwards is convinced of happiness as ultimate *telos* due to two related doctrines. The first is the goodness of God, which explains both the source, and the teleological status, of happiness:

Wherefore, if God created the world merely from goodness, every whit of this goodness must necessarily ultimately terminate in the consciousness of the creation; for the world is no other way capable of

¹ Schafer, “Editor’s Introduction,” *WJE* 13, 11.

² Edwards, Misc. 87, *WJE* 13, 251.

receiving goodness in any measure. But intelligent beings are the consciousness of the world; the end, therefore, of their creation must necessarily be that they may receive the goodness of God, that is, that they may be happy.³

Since God created the world *by* his goodness, God created the world *for* goodness, or happiness, which is “necessarily” the “end” of God’s communicative goodness. Thus, the goodness of God is the *source* of the happiness of intelligent beings, which is the end of their creation.

The second doctrine relates to the subjective activity of happiness, which is the perception, or contemplation, of God, which explains not only the *nature* of happiness, and the *object* of happiness, but also the ultimate *teleological status* of happiness. Happiness as “the end of man’s creation,”

appears also from the nature of happiness, which is the perception of excellency; for intelligent beings are created to be the consciousness of the universe, that they may perceive what God is and does. This can be nothing else but to perceive the excellency of what he is and does. Yea, he is nothing but excellency; and all that he does, nothing but excellent.⁴

Thus, Edwards reasons that if these two things are true, if God created from his goodness *and* if the happiness of intelligent beings is their contemplation of God, then this happiness must be the teleological end of God’s creation. Since intelligent beings’ functional teleological purpose of universal “consciousness,” i.e. the perception of God and his works, is the “nature of happiness,” Edwards reasons that happiness must be “the end of man’s creation.”

For the sake of his teleology of happiness, Edwards develops these two doctrines, the goodness of God and the nature of happiness, in several early sermons and private notebook entries leading up to Misc. 87 during the 1722-23 timeframe. Tracing this intellectual development is crucial, especially as it will

³ Ibid, 252.

⁴ Ibid. The nature of happiness, as the perception of “what God is and does,” the “excellency of what he is and does,” appears to derive from the “sweet delight *in God and divine things*” Edwards experiences at his conversion; “I thought with myself, how *excellent* a Being that was; and *how happy I should be, if I might enjoy that God.*” Edwards, *Personal Narrative*, WJE 16, 792-93.

demonstrate Edwards's explicit engagement with the rival teleological vision of the Enlightenment that makes practical virtue, benevolence, or usefulness toward the common good the ultimate *telos* of human existence, which motivates Edwards to prove his teleology of happiness. Edwards is not intent to demonstrate the primacy of the glory of God at this stage as Bombaro claims,⁵ but rather his agenda is centered on happiness. This is not to say that Edwards is unconcerned, or unfamiliar, with his tradition's high teleological view of God's glory. Rather, as I will demonstrate, Edwards assumes this doctrine of God's glory, and even utilises it for the sake of his teleological argument regarding happiness. Edwards is also undoubtedly aware of the Reformed tendency to subordinate happiness relative to the glory of God in the teleological scheme, which historical context I will explain. However, at this stage, Edwards's explicit concern and purpose is to prove that a rigorously theocentric spiritual happiness, rather than practical virtue, or even Christian obedience, is "the end of the creation."⁶

In what follows, I will demonstrate the emergence of Edwards's teleology of happiness in the early sermons and *Miscellanies* entries of 1722-23, particularly Edwards's initial engagement with the competing teleological views of the Enlightenment, and the extensive way in which Edwards develops the doctrines that provide the framework for proving his teleology as expressed in Misc. 87, "Happiness." Understanding the rich and multifaceted development of Edwards's early teleological vision will help demonstrate that Edwards's teleology of happiness represents a foundational and orthodox, rather than temporary and misguided, theological conviction that endures throughout his career.

2.2 Edwards's Teleology of Happiness in the Early Sermons

⁵ Bombaro, *Jonathan Edwards's Vision of Reality*, 12.

⁶ Edwards does not begin to explicitly engage the Reformed tendency to subordinate happiness relative to the glory of God until 1729-30, which development I will discuss in Chapter 5.

Even before Edwards starts his *Miscellanies* notebook in New York during the fall of 1722, the building blocks of his teleology of happiness already represent deeply held doctrinal convictions, as manifest by Edwards's preaching.⁷ The doctrine of the goodness of God and its relation to human happiness is not present in the pre-conversion sermon of 1721, *Christian Happiness*, however it does emerge after Edwards's conversion, as he prepares sermons during the summer and fall of 1722. I will highlight three of these sermons for the sake of both understanding the building blocks of Edwards's teleology, and demonstrating that these foundational teleological ideas are not new to Edwards when he begins to consider the teleological question in his *Miscellanies* notebook in the fall of 1722. This will help us interpret what Edwards intends and means by these ideas when they surface in the *Miscellanies* notebook, and it will also build a case against the common misconception that Edwards's early teleological writings represent either an unbiased, philosophical query or the defense and promotion of the divine glory. Most importantly, however, this examination will provide further evidence to suggest that Edwards begins his *Miscellanies* notebook with a particular teleological agenda to demonstrate happiness as ultimate *telos*, contributing to my overall thesis that Edwards's teleology of happiness represents, not a peripheral and temporary idea, but a central and foundational view that Edwards works to prove during 1723, and defend thereafter within a Reformed theological framework.

2.2.1 God's Goodness and the Creature's Happiness

The first place we find Edwards explicitly discussing God's communicative goodness as it relates to the creature's happiness is in a

⁷ The current scholarship fails to appreciate this 1722 background for understanding Edwards's teleological development. For example, Holmes begins with Misc. *gg* (spring of 1723), and McClymond and McDermott begin with Misc. 3 (spring/summer 1723). Holmes, *God of Grace and God of Glory*, 36; McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 11, 213.

fragment of a sermon written during the summer or fall of 1722, *Fragment: Application on Seeking God*, which, according to Kimnach, was “too good to discard” and utilized by Edwards multiple times for re-preaching.⁸ Edwards’s second “Use of Exhortation,” directed to “those who have never yet found God” and “have no stable happiness,” aims to motivate unbelievers to seek God by “the consideration of what you will find if you find God,” namely “complete and everlasting happiness.”

*If you find God, you will find complete and everlasting happiness, resulting from this deliverance from all evil, and the perfect enjoyment of this good.*⁹

Unbelievers should “seek God,” says Edwards, because with God they will find *happiness*, due to the fact that with God they will be free from all evil and enjoy “this good,” i.e. God. Whereas in *Christian Happiness*, the source of happiness is the “good man,” here it is the good *God*. The goodness of *God*, therefore, is a doctrine that emerges after Edwards’s conversion for the sake of explaining happiness as the ultimate gift of God and salvation. Indeed, Edwards’s statement about God’s goodness and the creature’s happiness directly references the work of redemption, as Edwards explains “freedom from all evil” in the following terms: “You will find a *Savior*, and an everlasting sure defense from all evil.” From this early stage, therefore, Edwards’s conception of happiness is not only grounded in the goodness of God, it is tethered to the gospel, which is the means to happiness with God.

Furthermore, as with the teleological proof of Misc. 87 written one and a half years later, it is the *communicative* nature of God’s goodness that is central to Edwards’s understanding of human happiness. “Complete and everlasting

⁸ Kimnach, *WJE* 10, 377-78. According to Kimnach, this sermon is used for re-preaching even four years later at Northampton (possibly at his installation), which means that these ideas are of central importance and enduring value to Edwards from 1722 until at least 1726.

⁹ Edwards, *Fragment: From an Application on Seeking God*, *WJE* 10, 382-83 (emphasis added).

happiness” is made possible by the “overflowing” goodness of God, the “communication from this original good,” which is its source:

God is an infinite, self-sufficient, all-sufficient, essential, overflowing good: he is the source of all good. There is no truly and properly good thing but what is a communication from this original good; he that finds God shall eternally possess all the good he will, or can, desire.¹⁰

The one who finds God, says Edwards, comes into the possession of all good and happiness, as a result of God’s communicative goodness. The “communication from this original good,” i.e. God, this “infinite, self-sufficient, essential, overflowing good,” provides the creature with all good, and therefore, “complete and everlasting happiness.” Neither Christian virtue, nor works of religious piety can generate happiness. The goodness of the creature will not suffice, only God and his goodness.

Happiness as the “possession” of the “good,” or God, has its roots in Platonic philosophy and the medieval tradition, particularly Augustine,¹¹ and is common to the “metaphysics of goodness” typical of Reformed tradition, as we have already discussed.¹² Several Reformed theologians express this version of happiness, including Polanus, and also Edward Leigh, who writes, “The happiness of a man consists in enjoying himself by virtue of the possession of the greatest good...by enjoying the greatest good.”¹³ Non-Calvinist thinkers familiar to Edwards also employ this concept, such as Malebranche, who writes,

¹⁰ Edwards, *Fragment: Application on Seeking God*, WJE 10, 383.

¹¹ Charry quotes Augustine, “whoever possesses God is happy,” and she describes his conception of happiness: “Possessing the triune God is happiness itself.” Charry, *God and the Art of Happiness*, 29. Anderson credits “the whole Platonic and Augustinian tradition into which Edwards was born” for his use of the concept, “the actual possession of the *real* good,” which “necessarily satisfies and pleases us,” in Edwards’s 1723 essay, “Excellency.” Anderson, WJE 6, 81-82.

¹² Recall that Muller’s “*felicitas*,” happiness, is defined by “the attainment of the good, God, who is the highest good.” Muller, *Dictionary*, 114; Stephen Wilson credits the “metaphysics of goodness” he finds typical of Reformed theology for the existence of this framework in Edwards. Stephen A. Wilson, *Virtue Reformed: Rereading Jonathan Edwards’s Ethics* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 39-40.

¹³ Leigh, quoted by Muller, *PRRD*3, 382.

“what must make the soul happy” is “not the comprehension of an infinite object...but the love and possession of an infinite good,”¹⁴ and John Locke, who calls joy the “delight of the mind, from the consideration of the present or assured approaching possession of a Good.”¹⁵ Therefore, that happiness derives from goodness is likely axiomatic for the young Edwards.

My main point, again, is that after his conversion and before starting his *Miscellanies* notebook, Edwards migrates not only toward this strictly theocentric version of happiness, but toward explaining happiness on the basis of the communicative goodness of God, which represents the precise later framework of Misc. 87 (and Misc. 3), thus it is likely that Edwards has his teleology of happiness in mind before he starts his *Miscellanies* notebook. Possessing good and happiness is, according to Edwards, made possible by the “communication” of good, from God, who is “an infinite, self-sufficient, all-sufficient, essential, overflowing good: he is the source of all good.” Again, he writes, “There is no truly and properly good thing but what is a communication from this original good.”¹⁶ Therefore, the foundational source of the creature’s happy possession of all good is the communicative goodness of God, which doctrine will anchor Edwards’s teleological framework for years to come. Edwards even appears to appreciate the beatific enjoyment of God as representative of the great good communicated by God for the creature’s happiness, as he writes: “[T]hen and then only, do you inquire after real, solid good, when you say, “Lord lift up the light of thy countenance upon me.”¹⁷

The doctrine of the communicative goodness of God is often perceived by the scholarship to be a later development in Edwards,¹⁸ however, its presence in

¹⁴ Nicholas Malebranche, *The Search After Truth* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 212.

¹⁵ Locke, *Essay*, Bk. II, Chapt. XX, 138.

¹⁶ Edwards, *Fragment: Application on Seeking God*, *WJE* 10, 383.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 383.

¹⁸ The “subsumption” theory put forth by McClymond and McDermott claims that Edwards utilizes “the rubric of God’s “communication”” to reconcile happiness and the glory of God as God’s end in creation in 1728, in Misc. 332. McClymond and

this early sermon, especially as it explains God's goodness as the source of human happiness, is evidence that this doctrine is foundational to Edwards's first teleological articulations, rather than a concept employed later for the sake of solving a teleological conundrum. The doctrine of God's communicative goodness for human happiness represents the genesis and foundation of Edwards's teleology of happiness, which framework begins to surface in his sermons in mid-1722.

God's communicative goodness is not a novel concept developed by Edwards, nor is it mysteriously inherited from the early church fathers, nor is it out of step with Edwards's Reformed tradition, as has frequently been claimed,¹⁹ but rather, it derives directly from the Reformed tradition. The *bonitas Dei* "has two functions in Reformed orthodoxy," writes Muller, first, the absolute, essential goodness of God, and second, "it is one of the primary attributes of God's self-manifestation,"²⁰ as Leigh writes, "God's Goodness is an essential property

McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 213; William Schweitzer argues that it is not until early 1724 that Edwards utilizes the "concept" of the communicativeness of God's goodness, "to solve a theological problem that fascinated him throughout his career: why did a self-sufficient God create?" William M. Schweitzer, *God is a Communicative Being: Divine Communicativeness and Harmony in the Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2012), 12. These scholars claim that God's communicative goodness is a later development, whereas my research demonstrates that this doctrine is central to Edwards's thought from the very beginning of his career in 1722, and foundational, therefore, to his teleology defined by goodness – and happiness.

¹⁹ Anderson has argued that Edwards's doctrine of communicative goodness is out of step with the Reformed tradition. Anderson, "Editor's Introduction," 84. McClymond and McDermott explain that this aspect of communication in Edwards's "might be compared to the patristic or early Christian thinkers." McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 5. Schweitzer writes that Edwards's doctrine of the Trinity, "seemingly took flight in terms of *communicativeness*, wherein Edwards argued that the mere fact that God is good – something even the most ardent Unitarian would affirm – implies a "disposition" to share or "communicate" that goodness...Edwards then employed the concept of divine communicativeness to solve a theological problem that fascinated him throughout his career: why did a self-sufficient God create?" Schweitzer, *God is a Communicative Being*, 12. The impression given by these commentators is that Edwards has employed a strange, or uniquely patristic, or even Unitarian doctrine.

²⁰ Muller, *PRRD3*, 506. Joel Beeke and Mark Jones observe the same doctrine in Puritan works, referencing Stephen Charnock as paradigmatic. Joel R. Beeke and Mark

whereby he is infinitely and of himself good, and the author and cause of all goodness in the creature.²¹ For Mastricht, the goodness of God implies the “communication” of divine goodness,²² which doctrine the Reformed appear to inherit from Aquinas,²³ and which represents the primary emphasis of this doctrine in the Reformed systems.²⁴ Whether considered *ad intra* or *ad extra*, God’s goodness in the Reformed tradition “*must be considered communicable and communicated goodness*,” according to Muller,²⁵ and indeed, the *ad extra* communication of the divine goodness is the source of human happiness. “The effect of God’s love,” which is, “the effect and manifestation of God’s eternal goodness,” is “the happiness of the creature” writes Muller.²⁶ Reformed divines credit God and the communication of his goodness for human happiness, as with Leigh, who writes, “according as he doth communicate himself to no more or less, so are we more or less happy.”²⁷

Therefore, it is not surprising that Edwards associates happiness with the communication of God’s goodness, as this notion is common to his Reformed sources. Edwards will even equate the creature’s reception of God’s goodness with happiness, which represents the end of their creation, as in Misc. 87: “the end, therefore, of their creation must necessarily be that they may receive the

Jones, *A Puritan Theology: Doctrine for Life* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2012), 78.

²¹ Leigh, quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 507.

²² Muller, *PRRD3*, 506.

²³ According to Aquinas, God “communicates” his goodness to his creatures.” Charry, *God and the Art of Happiness*, 98.

²⁴ Muller, *PRRD3*, 506. See also, John Gill, *A Complete Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity* (1767-70), Vol. I (Choteau: Old Paths Gospel Press), 136; Stephen Charnock, *The Existence and Attributes of God*, Vol. II (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 216; Turretin, quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 506; Melchior Leydecker, quoted by J. Martin Bac, *Perfect Will Theology: Divine Agency in Reformed Scholasticism as Against Suarez, Episcopius, Descartes, and Spinoza* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 60.

²⁵ Muller, *PRRD3*, 508 (emphasis added).

²⁶ Ibid, 568. According to Turretin, love is a primary form, or “virtue,” of God’s goodness to the creature: “goodness (*bonitas*), and those virtues belonging to it, namely love (*amor*), grace (*gratia*), and mercy (*miserericordia*)” are “concerned with the communication of good, but in diverse ways.” Turretin, quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 506.

²⁷ Leigh, quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 383.

goodness of God, that is, that they may be happy.²⁸ This teleological import of God's communicative goodness as it relates to happiness is also common to the Reformed tradition, as with Bates:

Infinite goodness shined forth in creation. This is the leading attribute, that called forth the rest of the work. As there was no matter, there was no motive to induce God to make the world, but what arose from his goodness....*It is evident therefore, that only free and unexcited goodness moved him to create all things, that he might impart being and happiness to the creature...*²⁹

Therefore, this fragment of Edwards's early sermon from 1722, *Application on Seeking God*, contains the foundational elements of the teleology of happiness Edwards will begin to articulate the following year in his *Miscellanies* notebook, especially the Reformed doctrine of the communicative goodness of God as it relates to happiness.

2.2.2 Redemption and Happiness as Ultimate Telos

The work of redemption, or salvation, is another theme in the early sermons that exposes Edwards's teleology of happiness. Edwards conceives of the communication of God's goodness for the sake of human happiness as intimately related to the saving work of Christ.³⁰ Edwards's 1722 sermon *The Value of Salvation* not only restates the goodness-happiness framework of *Application on Seeking God*, but, as we already briefly observed, it claims that the "value" of Christian salvation is the *happiness* it ultimately provides.

The salvation of the soul is of inestimable worth and value because the happiness that will be enjoyed by every saved soul will be inestimable: first, because the saved soul shall be delivered from all evil; secondly,

²⁸ Edwards, Misc. 87, *WJE* 13, 252.

²⁹ Bates, *Harmony of the Divine Attributes*, 6-7 (emphasis added).

³⁰ Seeking to correct the tendency to separate Edwards's "larger framework of God's chief end in creation" and his "soteriology," Sang Lee argues for the full integration of Edwards's soteriology and philosophical theology. Sang Hyun Lee, "Editor's Introduction," *WJE* 21, 100-105.

shall be brought to the enjoyment of all good; thirdly, this happiness shall be eternal.³¹

Edwards makes a profound statement: God's work of salvation has "inestimable worth and value" because of the "inestimable" happiness it achieves.

"Salvation," therefore, is a primary context for understanding Edwards's version of happiness as the "enjoyment of all good" communicated by God, as the communication of good and happiness to the creature will come through salvation, or the gospel of Christ. As Schweitzer writes, "we cannot lose sight of the priority Edwards gives to Christ as the singular medium of divine communication."³²

This notion of salvation as a form of God's goodness for the sake of human happiness also derives from Edwards's Reformed tradition. J. Martin Bac comments that Dutch theologian Melchior Leydecker "remarks that God communicates his goodness by making creatures *and by blessing them* in creation, providence, *and redemption*."³³ Likewise, Beeke and Jones write that for Stephen Charnock, "God's goodness is revealed in His works of creation and redemption," that "it was the goodness of God that provided a Mediator...Christ becomes the focal point for God's display of His pure goodness to his creatures in redemption."³⁴ Redemption, in the Reformed tradition, is the means of God's communicative goodness for blessing the creature with happiness, which doctrine Edwards has in mind for the sake of his teleological vision.

Furthermore, according to Edwards, the gospel informs us that happiness cannot be achieved by godliness, but must come from the communicative goodness of God received through the grace of the gospel. As we saw earlier, Edwards's 1722 sermon *Glorious Grace* makes this idea plain:

God has given even fallen man such a gift, that He has left nothing for man to do that he may be happy, but only to receive what is given

³¹ Edwards, *The Value of Salvation*, WJE 10, 322.

³² Schweitzer, *God is a Communicative Being*, 29.

³³ Bac, *Perfect Will Theology*, 18 (emphasis added).

³⁴ Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 79-80.

him...God offers man eternal happiness upon far more gracious terms since he is fallen than before; before, he was to do something himself for his happiness; he was to obey the law: but since he is fallen, God offers to save him for nothing, only if he will receive salvation as it is offered; that is, freely through Christ, by faith in him.³⁵

Happiness, writes Edwards, can be achieved by no human effort whatsoever; it must be received through Christ and the work of redemption, the saving communication of divine goodness. Edwards has come to realize through his conversion experience, and by recalling traditional Reformed doctrines, that happiness is a gift, communicated by God through the grace of the gospel. As he writes, “pleasure and happiness...are the effects of this marvelous grace.”³⁶

Edwards, furthermore, makes the point that happiness is the ultimate goal of the gospel in *Glorious Grace*, foreshadowing the later articulation of his teleology. “Twas only that we might be happy,” Edwards writes of the work of Christ on the cross.³⁷ Happiness is the greatest value of Christ’s saving work, and it is, accordingly, the ultimate goal of Christ’s saving work. Charnock conveys this same idea that “the design of God” in the work of salvation is to confer “happiness upon renewed creatures”:

The Scripture doth very emphatically express *the felicity of man to be the design of God* in the first forming of him...*as well as working him a new creature*....He hath given us the earnest of the Spirit, as an assurance that he will perform that very self-same thing, *the conferring that happiness upon renewed creatures for which he first formed man in creation*.³⁸

Therefore, these early sermons reveal that the teleological notion of divine goodness, through the work of redemption, and for the sake of human happiness, represents a conviction held by Edwards long before he explicitly addresses God’s “end of creation” in his *Miscellanies* notebook later in 1723. For this reason, I am suggesting that Edwards does not approach the topic of

³⁵ Edwards, *Glorious Grace*, WJE 10, 394.

³⁶ Ibid, 396.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Charnock, *Existence and Attributes of God*, Vol. II, 256 (emphasis added).

the “end of creation” as an unbiased philosophical query, or for the sake of defending the glory of God, but like a Reformed theologian who is, informed by his tradition and motivated by his recent religious experience, endeavoring to explain that, “happiness is the end of creation,” which is a prior conviction based on his understanding of God’s goodness and the goal of redemption. When we understand this background, Edwards’s early teleological conviction that “happiness is the end of the creation” is not nearly as “surprising” as some commentators suggest.³⁹

2.3 Proving “Happiness is the End of the Creation”

Subsequent to the sermons of 1722 that manifest Edwards’s interest in spiritual happiness as the *telos* of God’s goodness and redemptive purposes, Edwards turns to his private notebooks during late 1722 and 1723 for the sake of proving his emerging teleology of happiness. While Edwards does not explicitly state his teleological thesis until Misc. 3, “Happiness is the End of the Creation,” written during the spring of 1723, he spends the preceding winter months exploring its doctrinal foundations, and grappling with rival teleological visions. After Misc. 3, Edwards works to clarify and support important aspects of his teleology that will culminate with Misc. 87, which represents his mature proof of happiness as ultimate *telos*.

Edwards can be observed developing three familiar themes for the sake of proving his teleology of happiness during this time: the goodness of God, the contemplation of God, and the gospel of God.⁴⁰ Edwards is most interested in a coherent philosophical, and generally theological, proof that “happiness is the end of the creation,” for which the *source* of happiness, i.e. the communicative goodness of God, and the *nature* of happiness, i.e. the contemplation of God,

³⁹ McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 213.

⁴⁰ While Edwards does not explicitly integrate the gospel, “the grand medium” of happiness, into his teleological proof during this time, these writings are crucial to bolstering Edwards’s theological convictions and they will contribute to his Reformed defense and overall framework.

are the essential components. The following will demonstrate the development of these themes and the way in which Edwards utilizes his philosophy, theology, and metaphysics to counter the competing teleological claims of the Early Modern period and prove “happiness is the end of the creation.”

2.3.1 “Spiritual Happiness”

Misc. *f*, “Spiritual Happiness,” is presented as significant evidence that Edwards’s early philosophical, and even metaphysical, thinking is engaged for the sake of understanding happiness during the period at New York leading up to Misc. 3 when he first declares, “Happiness is the End of the Creation.”⁴¹ Edwards reasons in Misc. *f*, written in late-1722, that, “contrary to the opinion of Hobbes (that nothing is substance but matter)...no matter is substance but only God, who is a spirit,” *therefore*, “so also is it true, that no happiness is solid and substantial but spiritual happiness...”⁴² Edwards’s radically theocentric metaphysics, therefore, prove something about happiness, that true happiness is spiritual happiness. Edwards has opposed Hobbes’s materialism in his “Natural Philosophy” notebook during the summer and fall of 1722,⁴³ and Misc. *f* is evidence that happiness is just as central to Edwards’s philosophical thinking as it is to his preaching and personal experience during this time.

In this entry, Edwards uses language that is nearly identical to that which describes the “good” that is communicated by God and produces happiness in *Application on Seeking God* for the “spiritual happiness” of Misc. *f*, which he describes as “solid and substantial.” This indicates that his current work on happiness in Misc. *f* is related to his doctrine of God’s goodness and his developing framework aimed at explaining happiness as *telos*. Edwards writes in *Application on Seeking God*:

⁴¹ Anderson observes the close relationship between Edwards’s early metaphysics and his teleology. Wallace Anderson, “The Development of Edwards’ Philosophical Thought,” *WJE* 6, 79.

⁴² Edwards, Misc. *f*. *WJE* 13, 166.

⁴³ Edwards, *WJE* 6, 235, 238.

[T]hen and then only, do you inquire after *real, solid good*, when you say, “Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance upon me... There is no truly and properly good thing but what is a communication from this original good.”⁴⁴

Just as spiritual happiness is true and “solid and substantial” due to its relationship to God, the only “real, solid good” and “truly and properly good thing” is the goodness of God, even the beatific vision of God. This language is also present in *The Value of Salvation*, when Edwards describes the “unworthy sort of pleasure”:

[A]ll the happiness that is enjoyed in it is only because other men think them happy, and not from any *solid or substantial happiness* that is found therein.⁴⁵

Therefore, the metaphysical notion of “solid and substantial” spiritual happiness appears to be related to the theology of goodness and happiness Edwards develops in the early sermons. “Solid and substantial happiness” is the spiritual happiness that comes from the goodness of God, who is the object and source of all true happiness in the beatific vision. Thus, Misc. *f* is evidence that Edwards applies his metaphysical thinking for the sake of developing his doctrines of divine goodness and “spiritual happiness,” which are essential to his teleology.

Misc. *f* also likely serves to legitimise Edwards’s intellectualist foundation of spiritual happiness modeled after the beatific contemplation, which is essential to his eventual teleological proof in Misc. 87 (the nature of happiness is the “perception of excellency,” i.e. God). By establishing happiness as “spiritual,” Edwards not only declares reference to God, but subjectively, to the intellect. As Bombaro puts it, the happiness of “intelligent, perceiving existence” is a “spiritual or mental happiness,”⁴⁶ which idea is developed for the sake of proving happiness as ultimate *telos*. Indeed, Anderson argues that Edwards

⁴⁴ Edwards, *Fragment: Application on Seeking God*, WJE 10, 383 (emphasis added).

⁴⁵ Edwards, *The Value of Salvation*, WJE 10, 318 (emphasis added).

⁴⁶ Bombaro, *Jonathan Edwards’s Vision of Reality*, 136.

has the contemplation of God and his teleology of happiness in mind when writing Misc. *f*:

In Miscell. No. *f* Edwards notes that, just as Hobbes had mistakenly supposed that matter and not spirit is the only substance, so it would be mistaken to assume that happiness consists only in sensuous pleasures and that there is no real spiritual happiness. The contemplation of God is indeed the highest good for man, and is the end for which he was created.⁴⁷

Therefore, Misc. *f* is further evidence that Edwards has his teleology of “spiritual happiness” in mind as early as 1722, the subject of not only his preaching and theology, but even his early philosophy and metaphysics.⁴⁸

2.3.2 *Union with Christ and Happiness as Ultimate Telos*

Several early *Miscellanies* entries demonstrate Edwards’s efforts to develop his emerging teleology of happiness from the perspective of redemption and Christian soteriology. As we have already seen, Edwards understands the gospel as the means by which God communicates his goodness for the sake of the creature’s happiness, and Misc. *k*, *bb*, *dd*, and *ff* reveal Edwards’s exploration of the themes of spiritual resurrection and union with Christ for the sake of explaining the manner by which, as *Glorious Grace* proclaims, the ultimate *telos* of the gospel is happiness.

Just four entries after Misc. *f*, “Spiritual Happiness,” Edwards writes Misc. *k*, which addresses the saints “reigning with Christ a thousand years” and explores both union with Christ and spiritual resurrection as they relate to “spiritual happiness”:

By the saints reigning on earth....can be understood nothing but their reigning in Christ, who then shall reign; for they are united to him, and being one with him, it may be properly said that they reign....The world

⁴⁷ Anderson, “The Development of Edwards’ Philosophical Thought,” *WJE* 6, 78.

⁴⁸ Bombaro’s claim, is thus, eminently plausible: “Into this one word (happiness) he condenses and combines the cores of his teleology, philosophical anthropology, moral theory, and ontology.” Bombaro, *Jonathan Edwards’s Vision of Reality*, 134.

may very properly be said to have two resurrections: the one a spiritual resurrection, the other a natural; the one a resurrection of the world to its primitive holiness and spiritual happiness (though not to innocence), the other a natural renewing of all the world, and so a resurrection of bodies...The first resurrection is spiritual, the second natural.⁴⁹

Therefore, after exploring the metaphysics of spiritual happiness in Misc. *f*, Edwards quickly moves to develop its redemptive and soteriological foundation. Edwards believes that spiritual happiness is achieved by the spiritual resurrection, which is made possible by the believer's union, or "being one with," Christ through the gospel. Edwards continues this train of thought in Misc. *bb*, "Resurrection," where he argues for the sake of understanding "complete happiness," that a body can "partake of the union to Christ" because "God made the human soul with a design that it should be united to a body...and that part of the soul's nature, its inclination to the body...is united to Jesus Christ":

Now it is by virtue of this inclination of soul to body, that the resurrection of the body becomes absolutely necessary in order to complete happiness.⁵⁰

Thus, spiritual resurrection through union with the resurrected Christ is what produces real "spiritual happiness," as in Misc. *k*, but the resurrection of the body, as "united to Jesus Christ," is necessary unto "perfect happiness" at the consummation of redemption history. Immediately after another entry about the resurrection, Edwards, in Misc. *dd*, returns to happiness and union with Christ:

[W]e are united to Christ as much as members are to the head, and therefore ought to rejoice; seeing we know what it proceeds from, even his love to us, and the effects of it, [viz.] joy, happiness, spiritual and eternal life, etc.⁵¹

Union with Christ, according to Edwards, causes "joy, happiness, spiritual and eternal life," and therefore, we "ought to rejoice" at this, which "proceeds from" Christ's love, or God's goodness. Then, just two entries later, with echoes of the

⁴⁹ Edwards, Misc. *k*, *WJE* 13, 167-68.

⁵⁰ Edwards, Misc. *bb*, *WJE* 13, 178-79.

⁵¹ Edwards, Misc. *dd*, *WJE* 13, 181.

early sermons dealing with the happiness of “possessing all good” with God, Edwards asks, in Misc. *ff*, “Union with Christ,” how it is that believers “possess all things”:

By virtue of the believer’s union with Christ, he really doth possess all things. That we know plainly from Scripture. But it may be asked, how [doth] he possess all things? What is he the better for it? How is a true Christian so much richer than other men?

Edwards’s answer is that by union with Christ, believers “possess” all that “God three in one” is, “all that he has, and all that he does, all that he has made or done,” because “Christ, who certainly doth possess all things, is entirely his: so that he possesses it all.”⁵² Union with Christ is, therefore, the soteriological means by which believers receive the communication of God’s goodness for the sake of their “complete and everlasting happiness.”

Union with Christ, therefore, represents the redemptive, soteriological doctrine that explains the spiritual happiness that comes by the communication of God’s goodness. In these notebook entries, Edwards begins to elaborate on the communicative divine goodness and human happiness in terms of the gospel and Reformed soteriology, which serves to bolster his convictions about his developing teleology of happiness based on the goodness of God, as his very next notebook entry, Misc. *gg*, will explicitly reveal. There is scant evidence for the scholarly opinions that make convictions about the sovereignty or glory of God, or the question of creation *per se*, the driving motivation of Edwards’s early writings. What the texts do reveal, however, is the development of a highly integrated theology, philosophy, and even metaphysics, in Edwards’s early thought, explored for the sake of understanding spiritual happiness as ultimate *telos*.

2.3.3 *The Goodness of God and the Contemplation of God*

⁵² Edwards, Misc. *ff*, *WJE* 13, 183.

Misc. *gg*, “Religion,” begins a series of notebook entries written in 1723, including ‘Miscellanies’ Nos. *kk*, *tt*, 3, and 87, that deal explicitly with “the end of creation.” The development of this series reveals a particular agenda, rather than an unbiased philosophical theological query, as Edwards elaborates on the doctrinal convictions we have already observed in the early sermons and notebook entries of 1722, especially the happiness-producing communicative goodness of God. While the initial entries, Misc. *gg*, *kk* and *tt*, are not, like Misc. 3 and Misc. 87, explicit about “happiness” as the end of creation, they do appear to be written with happiness as ultimate *telos* in mind, for two reasons. First, we have already witnessed the diverse and abundant intellectual effort aimed at understanding spiritual happiness with respect to the inherently teleological goodness of God and gospel of God. Second, Misc. *gg* in fact reveals the development of the precise teleological framework Edwards employs in Misc. 87 to prove that happiness “must needs be the end of the creation,” particularly the doctrines of the goodness of God and the contemplation of God.

Edwards opens the entry by declaring that the world must have some ultimate *telos* related to “intelligent beings”: “’Tis most certain that God did not create the world for nothing.” Only “intelligent beings,” who “behold and admire the doings of God, and magnify him for them, and...contemplate his glories in them,” can explain God’s “end,” because, reasons Edwards, without intelligent creatures, “God could neither receive good himself nor communicate good.”⁵³ In other words, the teleological notion of God’s communicative goodness can only be explained by the existence of creatures capable of receiving that communication. The purpose of God’s creation, thinks Edwards, is explained by “intelligent beings” contemplating the glory of God, i.e. receiving the communicative goodness of God. This same teleological framework can be observed in Charnock, who writes under the heading, “The displaying of this goodness was the motive and end of all his works of creation and providence”:

⁵³ Edwards, Misc. *gg*, *WJE* 13, 185.

[T]he end why he conferred upon us the excellency of such a being was for our good, and the discovery of his goodness to us; for had not God created the world, he had been wholly unknown to any but himself; he produced creatures, that he might be known...God would create things, because he would be known in his glory and liberality; hence is it that he created intellectual creatures, because without them the rest of the creation could not be taken notice of: it had been in some sort in vain.⁵⁴

Therefore, in Edwards's earliest explicit consideration of God's end in creation, he draws from his own theological tradition to clarify and explain his preexisting teleological thesis about the communicative goodness of God and happiness.⁵⁵ Edwards does not begin his exploration into the theme of God's end in creation with a question, but rather a statement; a statement that is uniquely able to explain happiness as ultimate *telos*.

Edwards's conclusion in Misc. *gg*, "religion must be the end of the creation, the great end, the very end,"⁵⁶ should not be taken to mean that spiritual happiness is suddenly excluded from his teleological vision. As he begins to consider his teleology, Edwards is naturally conceiving of "the end" in the broadest and most general terms, i.e. the "religion" of "intelligent beings," which is most ultimately, spiritual happiness. Anderson is keen to observe that Misc. *gg* represents the continued development of earlier reflections that "contemplating the idea of God...affords a spiritual happiness," for the sake of his teleology:

In Miscell. no. *gg* Edwards carries these reflections an important step further: *the knowledge of God and the spiritual happiness it affords is the purpose of the entire universe*.⁵⁷

Therefore, Misc. *gg* is not written for the sake of exploring the question of teleology, but for the sake of explaining the framework for Edwards's teleology –

⁵⁴ Charnock, *Existence and Attributes of God*, Vol. II, 229.

⁵⁵ The relationship between happiness, goodness, and the intellect is also inherent to the medieval tradition, as Aquinas calls happiness, "the perfect good of an intellectual nature." Muller, *PRRD3*, 60.

⁵⁶ Edwards, Misc. *gg*, *WJE* 13, 185.

⁵⁷ Anderson, "The Development of Edwards' Philosophical Thought," *WJE* 6, 78 (emphasis added).

of happiness, especially the goodness of God and the contemplation of God, which will represent the foundational doctrines of his proof in Misc. 87, that “happiness must needs be the end of the creation.”

2.3.4 Engaging Rival Teleological Visions

Edwards’s engagement with the rival teleology of the Enlightenment that makes various forms of practical virtue the ultimate end of existence is central to my thesis that Edwards is particularly committed to prove and defend spiritual happiness as ultimate *telos*. Two notebook entries, Misc. *kk* and Misc. *tt*, make plain Edwards’s response to this rival teleological vision, and serve as the context for understanding Edwards’s first explicit articulation of his teleology of happiness in Misc. 3, “Happiness is the End of the Creation.”

The dethronement of Aristotelian teleology during the Enlightenment has been well documented,⁵⁸ yet teleological notions of God and the universe do not disappear. It is true that the influential Spinoza “spurns all teleology, Stoic, Aristotelian, or any other,”⁵⁹ writing in his *Ethics*, “God exists for the sake of no end, and God acts for the sake of no end,”⁶⁰ yet the majority of Edwards’s non-Calvinist Enlightenment sources maintain that the universe has teleological purpose. Historically comprehended in terms of happiness, the Enlightenment teleological vision appears increasingly conceived of in terms of practical virtue

⁵⁸ Don Garrett, “Teleology in Spinoza and Early Modern Rationalism,” in *New Essays on The Rationalists*, eds. Rocco J. Gennaro and Charles Huenemann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 311; Donald Rutherford, “Innovation and orthodoxy in early modern philosophy,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Early Modern Philosophy*, ed. Donald Rutherford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 19; Jonathan Israel, *Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 466.

⁵⁹ Israel, *Enlightenment Contested*, 466.

⁶⁰ Spinoza, quoted by Stephen Nadler, “Doctrines of explanation in late scholasticism and in the mechanical philosophy,” in *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Philosophy*, Vol. I, eds. Daniel Garber and Michael Ayers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 529-30.

for the sake of the common good, a generally Stoic framework, which, writes Jonathan Israel, conceives of a “universe-God,” that is “inherently teleological.”⁶¹

Humans, according to the Stoics, as the highest and noblest part of Nature, alone possess the privilege of (potentially) understanding the rationality of Nature and adhering to it, thereby contributing through cultivation of virtue both to its fulfillment and to the perfecting of their own natures. Virtue is thus explained in terms of the rationale of the cosmos as a whole.⁶²

Virtue, therefore, becomes a central teleological principle, defining human rationality, purpose and perfection during the Enlightenment, which influence Edwards comes to recognize, and to which he responds. Contrary to the Stoic vision Israel describes, Edwards conceives of the *telos* of intelligent beings, not as the “rationality of Nature” in terms of virtue, but the “religion” of Christianity in terms of receiving the communications of God’s goodness via the happy contemplation of God’s excellency.

Just three entries after explaining the conceptual pillars of his teleology of spiritual happiness in Misc. gg, Edwards continues to develop and clarify his teleological vision in response to the rival Enlightenment view in Misc. kk, “Religion”:

Since the world would be altogether good for nothing without intelligent beings, so intelligent beings would be altogether good for nothing except to contemplate the Creator. Hence we learn that devotion, *and not mutual love, charity, justice, beneficence, etc.* is the highest end of man, and devotion is his principal business.⁶³

Therefore, what Edwards means by the “religion,” or “devotion” of intelligent beings is the contemplation of God, which version of happiness defines the “highest end” of his teleological vision, and here Edwards states explicitly: “the highest end of man” is “*not* mutual love, charity, justice, beneficence, etc.,” which counters a common tendency of Enlightenment thought.

⁶¹ Israel, *Enlightenment Contested*, 463.

⁶² Ibid, 466.

⁶³ Edwards, Misc. kk, *WJE* 13, 186 (emphasis added).

As we have previously discussed, virtuous activity, whether godly obedience, or practical virtue, has, by the eighteenth century, ascended to the highest rung of the teleological ladder in many intellectual circles. Furthermore, as previously discussed in Chapter 1, the growing dichotomy between virtue and happiness during the Enlightenment represents another important and related aspect of the intellectual background, whereby virtue and the common good is increasingly declared the ultimate *telos*, thus subordinating happiness in the teleological scheme. The notion that individual happiness might stand in opposition to the “common good” is particularly poignant in Cumberland, who writes “that “the common good of all” is the end to which all standards are to be assessed,” thus rejecting the notion that personal happiness “be the entire and adequate end of anyone,”⁶⁴ as Irwin writes, “he does not agree that one’s own happiness is or ought to be one’s supreme end.”⁶⁵

According to the influential British philosopher Samuel Clarke, “moral virtue” is the foundation and goal of religion and all of life:

Moral virtue is the Foundation and the Summ, the Essence and the Life of all true Religion; For the Security whereof, all positive Institution was originally designed; For the Restoration whereof, all revealed Religion was ultimately intended.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Cumberland, quoted by Irwin, *Ethics*, Vol. II, n. 23, 224.

⁶⁵ Irwin, *Ethics*, Vol. II, 224. Cumberland’s *De legibus naturae* would have been the subject of academic study at Yale, and likely present in the Dummer collection. Edwards lists Maxwell’s English translation of 1727 in his catalogue soon after its publication. Fiering counts Cumberland among a very small group of “naturalistic” seventeenth-century moral thinkers including the Ralph Cudworth, Nicolas Malebranche, and John Norris, that after the Henry More, “composed a subfoundation....all four of these writers had an impact.” Fiering, *Seventeenth Century Harvard*, 295.

⁶⁶ Samuel Clarke, quoted by Fiering, *Seventeenth Century Harvard*, 297. The influence of Clarke on Edwards is well documented. Fiering identifies Clarke as a particularly influential source for Edwards’s ethics. Edwards does not seem to have studied Clarke in earnest until after this period, but Clarke’s Boyle Lectures of 1704 and 1705 were influential during the two decades leading up to Edwards early career. The lectures were published together in 1711 as *A Discourse Concerning the Being and Attributes of God, the Obligations of Natural Religion, and the Truth and Certainty of the Christian Revelation*. Also referred to as *Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, Edwards seems to have acquired a copy of the sixth edition (London, 1724/25), with which he

Rather than the happiness of contemplative devotion to God, Clarke's teleology is grounded by natural religion that makes "moral virtue" ultimate *telos*. Recall Taylor's observation that "a central feature of Enlightenment morality" is "the stress on practical benevolence":

Our scientific effort should *not serve simply to create objects of contemplation* for us, but should serve to "relieve the condition of mankind." Practical charity is enjoined to us. The Enlightenment took this up in intensified form...⁶⁷

This "stress on practical benevolence" in moral philosophy naturally impacts the teleological vision of the Enlightenment, as Valeri describes, it "promoted the belief that God designed the cosmos to reveal and enforce the virtues of benevolence."⁶⁸ Indeed, this vision comes into direct conflict with the teleological convictions of Edwards. As Taylor describes it, by the influence of Locke, an "instrumental rationality," became "one of the major organizing ideas of the Enlightenment,"⁶⁹ which departs from the traditional view, that "highest expression of reason was contemplation – in the beatific vision."⁷⁰

This conflict between practical benevolence and the contemplation of God is precisely manifest in Misc. *kk*, which demonstrates Edwards's commitment to defend the "traditional view." Edwards takes notice of this rival teleology of practical virtue that tends to oppose and subordinate the happiness of the beatific contemplation of God, and he is motivated and intent to counter the Enlightenment view, as Misc. *tt*, "Devotion," reveals:

It has been said that there may be too much of devotion, and this reason has been given for it: that *one man was made to be useful to the rest of the universe, was made for the common good of the whole frame*; and,

frequently interacts and cites. Fiering names Clarke, along with Shaftesbury, as the writers whose "seminal work" was "tremendously influential" during the early eighteenth-century. Ibid, 296.

⁶⁷ Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 84-85 (emphasis added).

⁶⁸ Valeri, "Jonathan Edwards, the New Divinity, and Cosmopolitan Calvinism," 26.

⁶⁹ Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 243.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

that there may be a degree of devotion that may hinder one from their being so useful to the rest of the creatures as they might otherwise be—neither of which are agreeable to reason.⁷¹

The devotion of contemplating the Creator is perceived by many of Edwards's Enlightenment contemporaries as impractical, that is, not "useful" to the "common good," thus, striking against the secular teleological notion that "man was made to be useful to the rest of the universe." Edwards takes considerable time to address this rival teleology:

As for the first, that the highest end of a particular creature was to be useful to the common good of creatures in general. Which I think is the same thing as to say, that the world was made that the parts of it might be mutually useful to each other; that is, that the world was made to have all the parts of it nicely hanging together, and sweetly harmonizing and corresponding...⁷²

This stance is, according to Edwards, both illogical, "a contradiction and nonsense," and atheological, as the intelligent creature "was undoubtedly made to glorify the Creator, so that devotion must be his highest end."⁷³ The view that Edwards opposes in *Misc. tt* is precisely what Taylor describes as the "new vision" of the Enlightenment inspired by Locke:

But in the new vision, which Locke helped to prepare...The goodness and the providence of God are shown above all in his designing the world for the preservation of its denizens, and particularly so that the various parts of it conduce to reciprocal conservation...Locke helped to define and give currency to the growing Deist picture, which will emerge fully in the eighteenth century, of the universe as a vast interlocking order of beings, mutually subserving each other's flourishing...⁷⁴

Edwards opposes this "new vision" that declares that the goodness of God is manifest by "his designing the world" for the mutual "preservation" and "reciprocal conservation" of human beings, "mutually subserving each other's flourishing." One of Locke's most influential ideas, according to Taylor, is the

⁷¹ Edwards, *Misc. tt*, *WJE* 13, 189 (emphasis added).

⁷² *Ibid*, 189-90.

⁷³ *Ibid*, 190.

⁷⁴ Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 244.

notion that “usefulness” (precisely the term used by Edwards) toward the public good is the sum of God’s design for the universe, that “the proper end of intellectual rationality is usefulness to our life’s purposes.”⁷⁵

Edwards’s teleology, rather, defines the goodness of God as a communicative power aimed at the creature’s beatific enjoyment of God, the divine good, whereas the Enlightenment vision fashions God’s goodness as a means to “usefulness” and the common good. “[W]ithout a doubt,” writes Edwards, defending his theocentric teleology, “there is an immediate communication between the Creator and this highest of creatures, according to the order of being.”⁷⁶ Thus, Edwards defines the “highest end of creation” by the communication of God’s goodness and happiness to the creature in the form of the beatific contemplation of God, rather than the communication of ‘common’ goodness from creature to creature in the form of practical virtue, or “usefulness.”⁷⁷

Edwards’s teleology is not only out of fashion, it is viewed as an impediment to usefulness and the common good, attracting the charge of “enthusiasm,” as he writes, “Those that call this enthusiasm talk very unphilosophically.”⁷⁸ Edwards counters this notion with a foretaste of his explicit articulation about spiritual happiness as the “end of creation,” as he writes:

⁷⁵ Ibid, 243. Locke sums up the aim of his *Essay* as, “Truth and *Usefulness*.” Locke, *Essay*, 9.

⁷⁶ Edwards, Misc. tt, *WJE* 13, 190-91.

⁷⁷ Edwards explicitly engages this rival teleology even one year later in 1724, reinterpreting it in light of his teleology of happiness: In Misc. 99, Edwards admits that human beings are made to be useful to one another, *but* for the sake of one another’s enjoyment of, not the common, but divine good, “the great happiness for which he was created.” He writes, “Tis evident that men were intended for society, that is, to assist each other in their interests, and chiefly to assist each other in their chief interest; and if in subservient interests, surely most of all in the great happiness for which he was created, and to which all other interests were only intended to subserve.” Edwards, Misc. 99, *WJE* 13, 268.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 190-91. Matthew Stewart has shown that “transcendent” religious “enthusiasm” was criticized by Enlightenment *philosophes*, for whom virtue is preeminent, such as Locke and Shaftesbury. In fact, Stewart characterizes Edwards’s views as “transcendent,” ‘enthusiastic’ and ‘other-worldly.’ Stewart, *Nature’s God*, 51.

Not that I believe that a man would be the less useful even in this world, if his devotion was to that degree, as to keep him all his lifetime in an *ecstasy*.⁷⁹

Even such a degree of Godward contemplative devotion as “ecstasy,” Edwards is convinced, will not impede usefulness toward the common good. Therefore, in addition to demonstrating Edwards’s opposition to Enlightenment teleology, this statement indicates that Edwards associates devotional contemplation of God with an intensely joyful or happy state, as writers of Edwards’s milieu do associate the ‘mystical’ spiritual experience of “ecstasy” with “contemplative devotion,” and intense “delight.”⁸⁰ Edwards perceives that a conflict exists between ‘enthusiastic’ spiritual contemplation and ‘useful’ ethical behavior, promoting the former, the contemplative spiritual enjoyment of God, rather than useful, practical benevolence for the common good, as the ultimate end of human existence.

Edwards, therefore, develops his teleology of spiritual happiness in response to the emerging Enlightenment view that practical “usefulness” toward the “common good” is ultimate *telos*, which inspires and motivates Edwards to explain and prove happiness as “the end of creation.” These texts do not indicate that Edwards is engaged with Enlightenment thought for the sake of defending the supremacy of the glory of God, nor do they represent an unbiased philosophical query. Rather, Edwards responds to this Enlightenment teleological view with the spiritual happiness of contemplating God as “the end

⁷⁹ Edwards, Misc. *tt*, *WJE* 13, 191.

⁸⁰ “Ecstasy,” *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Gordon S. Wakefield (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1983), 125. See also Gordon Rupp, “A Devotion of Rapture in English Puritanism,” in *Reformation, Conformity and Dissent: Essays in Honour of Geoffrey Nuttall*, ed. R. Buick Knox (London: Epworth Press, 1977). On Puritan mysticism, see Tom Schwanda, *Soul Recreation: The Contemplative Mystical Piety of Puritanism* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012); J.D. Williams, “The Puritan Quest for Enjoyment of God: An Analysis of the Theological and Devotional Writings of Puritans in Seventeenth-Century England” (PhD Thesis, University of Melbourne, 1997); Charles E. Hambrick-Stowe, *The Practice of Piety: Puritan Devotional Disciplines in Seventeenth-Century New England* (Williamsburg: University of North Carolina Press, 1982).

of creation” in mind, thus opposing the notion that virtue and usefulness for the common good is the purpose of the universe.

The Enlightenment teleology that Edwards opposes in these notebook entries also represents a tendency within his own Puritan and Reformed tradition. Recall that Ames is particularly adamant that the glory of God is achieved through practical, godly obedience, rather than contemplation or happiness. Mark Noll describes the focus on legal obedience over happiness thus:

Believers and nonbelievers alike were enjoined to follow God’s law, but the leading theologians described law-keeping more as a reflection of divine glory than as a path to human happiness.⁸¹

Similarly, Schneewind argues that although Aristotelian teleology “was being displaced quite generally during the modern period,” a more specifically “law-centered” Christian teleology emerged that was more rigorously focused on the divine commands.⁸² Christian thinkers during the time of Edwards, therefore, do not abandon teleology,⁸³ but tend to promote the notion that Christian virtue and obedience is the sum of the creature’s purpose and *telos*. Thus, Sang Lee’s assertion that Edwards “restored” the “teleological principle that had been taken out of the cosmos by the seventeenth-century mechanistic philosophers,”⁸⁴ is not entirely accurate. What Edwards perceived, as he laid the foundation for his teleological project, was not the disappearance of teleology, but a competing teleological framework emerging across the entire theological spectrum of the Enlightenment, a teleology that made useful practical benevolence and godly

⁸¹ Noll, *America’s God*, 28.

⁸² Schneewind, *Invention of Autonomy*, 286.

⁸³ “Christian teleology was widely used by seventeenth-century thinkers to explain the point of the various dispositions, feelings, and abilities that go to make up our nature as moral beings, and sometimes to show our true goal or our function in the universe as well. That sort of teleology did not disappear in the eighteenth century, nor did the belief that without knowledge of God’s ends we could not know how to direct our actions.”
Ibid.

⁸⁴ Sang Hyun Lee, *The Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 105-6.

obedience the ultimate *telos* of human existence, rather than the “traditional” happiness of the beatific contemplation of God.

Therefore, these Miscellanies entries provide particular insight into the “new vision” of the Enlightenment that Edwards perceives, and counters, supporting our thesis that Edwards’s agenda during these years is not to exalt the glory of God in the face of an anthropocentric Enlightenment, nor is it to provide an answer to the conundrum about the creation of the world, but rather, to defend the teleological notion that the happiness of contemplating God is the ultimate “end of the creation.” Indeed, Edwards’s teleological vision becomes eminently clear with the notebook entry written just a couple of months later during the spring of 1723, Misc. 3, “Happiness is the End of the Creation.” Having established the general philosophical and theological foundation necessary to defend the teleological convictions that have emerged through his early religious experience and philosophical and theological reflections against the rival Enlightenment view, Edwards proceeds to articulate his initial teleological proof with Misc. 3, “Happiness is the end of the creation.”⁸⁵

2.3.5 Teleology and Happiness in the Reformed Tradition

Before discussing Edwards’s first theological proof of his teleology of happiness in Misc. 3, which draws primarily from Edwards’s Reformed heritage, I will discuss the Puritan and Reformed background associated with his topic. As previously mentioned, the notion of happiness as ultimate *telos* is not uncommon to the Puritan and Reformed tradition, nevertheless, this idea is a source of some controversy as it relates to this tradition’s high teleological view of godly obedience, and especially the glory of God, to which human happiness is often subordinated. Thus, in addition to the rival teleological vision associated with the Enlightenment, Edwards own theological tradition challenges the teleological status of human happiness he is intent to prove and defend.

⁸⁵ Edwards, Misc. 3, *WJE* 13, 199.

Puritan and Reformed divines inherit the doctrine that names happiness the ultimate *telos* of human existence from the medieval tradition. Aquinas and nearly every other medieval doctor subscribe to this teleological vision.⁸⁶ Rival Stoic teleological explanations making human virtue ultimate *telos* surface, but are mostly avoided.⁸⁷ The rejection of happiness as ultimate *telos* rarely occurs, but in 1401, Coluccio Salutati sets God in opposition to beatitude for the sake of encouraging ‘proper’ godly “actions,” writing, “our actions should...be directed towards God, who is the end of all things. Anyone who proposes another end for himself, *even beatitude*, will never act properly...”⁸⁸ However, for the vast majority of medieval theologians, the happiness of contemplating God, i.e. the beatific enjoyment of God, represents the *telos* of human existence, as Aquinas writes, “Human beings and other rational creatures pursue the ultimate end by knowing and loving God.”⁸⁹

Likewise, Protestant Scholastic works, such as Golius’s *Epitome Doctrinae Moralis* (1592), used extensively at seventeenth century Harvard, teach the traditional view that happiness “in the contemplation of God” is the “ultimate end of human activity.”⁹⁰ The generally Aristotelian ethics curriculum at Harvard promotes the high teleological status of happiness, for instance, the *Summa Philosophiae* and *Ethica* of Eustache de Saint-Paul.⁹¹ Eustache uses three main headings for his *Ethica*: happiness (“the good” and “the end”), the principles of human actions, and human actions themselves.⁹² The *Ethica*, which Kraye calls “one of the most influential French manuals used in Protestant as well as Catholic countries,” establishes happiness as the *summum bonum* and ultimate *telos*, which is the foundation for the entire system, as Eustache

⁸⁶ McMahon, “From the Happiness of Virtue to the Virtue of Happiness,” 11.

⁸⁷ Bejczy, “Virtue as an End in Itself,” 118.

⁸⁸ Coluccio Salutati, quoted by Bejczy, “Virtue as an End in Itself,” 115.

⁸⁹ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, “On the Ultimate End,” in *Thomas Aquinas Selected Writings*, ed. Ralph McInerny (London: Penguin Books, 1998), 496.

⁹⁰ Golius, quoted by Fiering, *Seventeenth Century Harvard*, 75.

⁹¹ Fiering, *Seventeenth Century Harvard*, 80; Kraye, “Conceptions of Moral Philosophy,” 1283.

⁹² Kraye, “Conceptions of Moral Philosophy,” 1283.

writes, “the goal of a complete philosophical system is human happiness.”⁹³

Therefore, while Aristotle was dethroned with respect to metaphysics, the foundational principle of his *Nicomachean Ethics*, happiness as ultimate *telos*, endures at Puritan institutions like Harvard, as Fiering writes, “That all creatures seek the good and that the highest good for man is “happiness” almost everyone agreed.”⁹⁴

The teleology of happiness is also present in Reformed theological works, as Muller, referencing Mastricht, Cocceius, Leigh, and Gill, writes that God’s blessedness, or happiness, is “the final goal of all creaturely existence: God is both blessed *in se* and the source (*fons*) of all blessedness.”⁹⁵ Even the evangelist George Whitefield writes in the eighteenth century: “Is it the end of religion to make men happy, and is it not every one’s privilege to be as happy as he can?”⁹⁶ Similarly, Reformed theologians William Perkins and Edward Leigh support the teleological status of happiness within their discussions of the nature of theology, which is described as “the science of living blessedly forever.”⁹⁷

However, while many Reformed theologians uphold the view of happiness as ultimate *telos*, some do not, and those that do must come to terms with their tradition’s equally high teleological views of Christian obedience and especially, the glory of God, which represents a foundational teleological concept within the tradition. As Muller describes, “Just as God’s glory is manifested in all his works, so do all his works redound to his glory as their proper end.”⁹⁸ Therefore, the primary challenge for the Reformed theologian who desires to maintain happiness as ultimate *telos* is the reconciliation of the

⁹³ Eustache de Saint Paul, quoted by John Cottingham, “Philosophy and Self-improvement: Continuity and Change in Philosophy’s Self-conception from the Classical to the Early-modern Era,” in *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Ancient and Moderns*, eds. Michael Chase et al. (West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2013), 157.

⁹⁴ Fiering, *Seventeenth Century Harvard*, 75.

⁹⁵ Muller, *PRRD3*, 382.

⁹⁶ George Whitefield, quoted by Alcorn, *Happiness*, 6.

⁹⁷ Beeke and van Vliet, “The Marrow of Theology,” 57.

⁹⁸ Muller, *PRRD3*, 550.

view that the glory of God as the “proper end” of all of God’s works. Heereboord upholds the teleological status of happiness in his *Meletemata* by ‘reforming’ Aristotle’s scheme, naming “the glorification of God,” the “highest happiness for man.”⁹⁹ Yet, as Edwards is undoubtedly aware, adherence to happiness as ultimate *telos* is not universal. As Kraye writes, “there were some who argued that Aristotle’s notions of the supreme good and of virtue were so contrary to the tenets of faith that they had no place in a Christian education.”¹⁰⁰

One primary source of opposition to Aristotelian ethics and happiness as ultimate *telos* is the broad and longstanding influence of Puritan William Ames, who is representative of this rejection of Aristotle and the teleology of happiness, as he writes in the *Marrow*:

What chiefly and finally ought to be striven for is not happiness which has to do with our own pleasure, but goodness which looks to God’s glory. For this reason, theology is better defined as that good life whereby we live to God than as that happy life whereby we live to ourselves.¹⁰¹

Ames’s influential conviction is that the ultimate end of human existence is *not happiness*, but goodness, ie. godliness,¹⁰² as a means to God’s glory. “All disciplines,” writes Ames, “have *eupraxia*, good practice, as their end.”¹⁰³ “The practical theologians like Ames,” writes Fiering, not only eschewed philosophy, but they “condemned the belief that happiness is the ultimate aim of man and especially opposed the notion that contemplation is the proper end of human endeavor.”¹⁰⁴ Therefore, Ames not only rejects the idea of happiness as ultimate *telos*, but due to his intensely practical bent, he also rejects the notion that the contemplation and beatific enjoyment of God is the ultimate goal of life.

⁹⁹ Fiering, *Seventeenth Century Harvard*, 100.

¹⁰⁰ Jill Kraye, “Conceptions of Moral Philosophy,” 1281.

¹⁰¹ Ames, *Marrow*, 78.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Fiering, *Seventeenth Century Harvard*, 76; Kraye, “Conceptions of Moral Philosophy,” 1299.

There is no place for the pursuit of happiness in Ames's theology, which even rejects the happiness of godliness, preferring the "goodness which looks to God's glory."¹⁰⁵ Happiness is, therefore, radically subordinated to godliness and God's glory, as Eusden describes:

For Ames the end of theology was never to produce blessedness, which he felt related chiefly to man's ultimate aspiration and desire. In search for his own blessedness, man could miss God, the very object of his living rightly.¹⁰⁶

Ames's anti-happiness stance has a lasting impact on Puritan thought throughout the seventeenth and into the eighteenth century, on both sides of the Atlantic. The Amesian view that radically subordinates human happiness to the divine glory is present in both Europe,¹⁰⁷ and Puritan New England. Boston's Cotton Mather, who highly esteemed Ames, echoes him in his influential *Bonifactus* (1710), stating that the great end of life is, not happiness, but "to do good."¹⁰⁸ Likewise, as we have already seen, Knight describes the Amesian divines as "pragmatists rather than pietists," for whom "happiness was always deferred,"¹⁰⁹ and Edwards's contemporary in Colonial America, Gilbert Tennant, rejects happiness as ultimate *telos*, due to the threat of 'self-interest.'¹¹⁰

Several theologians, however, avoid the radical subordination of happiness inspired by Ames and strive for the teleological union of human happiness and divine glory. For example, Thomas Shepard writes that sanctification is the "work of the Spirit in the soul whereby the soul, *beholding*

¹⁰⁵ Ames, *Marrow*, 78.

¹⁰⁶ Eusden, "Introduction," *Marrow*, 47; See also Beeke and van Vliet, "The Marrow of Theology," 57.

¹⁰⁷ Kraye cites Polinus (1616), and Kelpius and Erius (1690): "Siluit [Aristoteles] de providenria Dei, de veris actionum humanarum principiis, . . . de vera hujus et fiiturae vitae beatitate, de ultimo omnium actionum humanarum . . . fine, gloria Dei." Kraye, "Conceptions of Moral Philosophy," 1309, n15.

¹⁰⁸ Holifield, *Theology in America*, 64. Cotton Mather writes of Ames in his *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702): "That profound, that sublime, that subtle, the irrefragable – yea, that angelical doctor." Eusden, "Introduction," *Marrow*, 11.

¹⁰⁹ Knight, *Orthodoxies in Massachusetts*, 81.

¹¹⁰ Holifield, *Theology in America*, 88.

the glory of Christ and feeling his love, hereupon closes with the whole will of Christ and seeketh to please him *as his happiness and utmost end.*"¹¹¹ Christ and his glory, therefore, represent the believer's ultimate end *and happiness*, according to Shepard. Efforts to equate human happiness and divine glory appear, but mostly outside of the Puritan mainstream during the eighteenth century. New England latitudinarian Samuel Johnson argues that the glory of God is the same with the happiness of the creature,¹¹² and British contemporary Elisha Smith declares in *The Cure of Deism* (1740), that God's glory and human happiness are one:

For God has made our duty and interest, his glory and our good the same thing; they are but different expressions importing the same meaning. Man's happiness was the certain End of God, in creating him; when that is intended, his glory is effectually intended, tho' unmentioned...So that if God seeks his own glory, by communicating of his goodness towards our happiness, we can never otherwise seek his glory, but by making his methods effectual to our own happiness...at the same time we design our own true happiness in all that we do, we design his glory...¹¹³

Of course the influential *Westminster Larger Catechism* (1647) attempts to unify happiness and divine glory, in Question 1:

"What is the chief and highest end of man?" Answer: "Man's chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy him forever."¹¹⁴

In fact, New England Presbyterian John Thomson attempts an interpretation of the *Westminster Catechism* that makes God's glory and human happiness one.¹¹⁵ Yet, while happiness, or enjoyment,¹¹⁶ is intimately associated with the

¹¹¹ Shepard, quoted by McGiffert, *God's Plot*, 16 (emphasis added).

¹¹² Holifield, *Theology in America*, 88.

¹¹³ Elisha Smith, *The Cure of Deism* (London, 1740), Vol. 2, 91-92.

¹¹⁴ "Westminster Larger Catechism," *The Westminster Confessions of Faith and Catechisms* (Lawrenceville: Christian Education & Publications, 2007), 153.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, 98.

¹¹⁶ While the catechism uses the term "enjoy," it is nearly synonymous with "happiness," as Thomas Watson's *Body of Divinity* relates: "The enjoyment of him (God) is the highest *felicity*." And furthermore, "We shall have a lively sense of this glorious estate...we shall have a quick and lively sense of the infinite pleasure which arises from

Westminster's "chief and highest end of man," the most influential expositions of this catechism reveal a persistent tension between human happiness and God's glory. There is a desire to emphasise the high teleological status of both the glory of God and human happiness, however, these attempts tend to leave happiness in a subordinate position relative to God's glory.

Thomas Watson's *Body of Practical Divinity* (1690), which Edwards had likely studied, is one example.¹¹⁷ Commenting on the first question of the *Westminster Catechism* in his influential commentary, Watson writes, "Here are *two ends* of life specified. I. The glorifying of God. II. The enjoying of God."¹¹⁸ For Watson, it is "by glorifying God" through appreciation, adoration, affection, and subjection, that "we come at last to the blessed enjoyment of him."¹¹⁹ Glorifying God is one thing, pursued through different forms of worship and godliness, but happiness is another. Happiness is a reward for glorifying God with godliness, to be enjoyed in the life to come. Thus, the happiness of enjoying God for Watson is an eschatological state; believers are "qualified and fitted for a state of blessedness" by glorifying God on earth, arriving at "the enjoyment of God in the life to come."¹²⁰ Watson's "two ends" are, therefore, explained by two different stages of life. The first is glorifying God in this life, and the second is the happiness believers "come at last to enjoy," the "blessed vision" of contemplating and loving God in heaven.¹²¹

the *enjoyment of God*: we shall know ourselves to be *happy*..." Thomas Watson, *Body of Divinity*, 23, 24. Edwards also identifies happiness with enjoyment, as in Misc. 530 where he writes, "...for if a man is utterly miserable he is utterly excluded the *enjoyment of God*...The more a man loves God, the more unwilling will he be to be deprived of this *happiness*." Edwards, Misc. 530, *WJE* 18, 75.

¹¹⁷ Watson's *Body of Divinity* is listed twice in Edwards books catalogue. Edwards, *WJE* 26, 136, 224.

¹¹⁸ Watson, *Body of Divinity*, 6 (emphasis added).

¹¹⁹ Ibid, 20.

¹²⁰ Ibid, 22.

¹²¹ Ibid, 24-25.

Even if other Reformed theologians avoid the eschatological dichotomy of Watson's interpretation that relegates the happy enjoyment of God to the afterlife, they nevertheless tend to subordinate human happiness to the glory of God by identifying happiness as a "means" to the most ultimate end, the glory of God. Edward Leigh, member of the Westminster Assembly, communicates this general theological framework in his discussion of the *libertas Dei*:

[Will is that] by which God freely, immutably, and efficaciously wills and approves of the Good and that only, both in *the chief and first, viz. himself and his own glory*, as the end: and also *the secondary, inferior and subordinate good, viz. that of the creatures*, as far as it hath an image of that chief good, and tends as *a means to that ultimate end*.¹²²

For Leigh, the good of the creature is an "inferior and subordinate good," a "means to that ultimate end," which is God and "his own glory." Thomas Ridgely's *Body of Divinity* (1731-33), which, as I will discuss in Chapter 5, Edwards also studies, is another example. Addressing question one of the *Westminster Catechism*, Ridgely refers to "the glorifying and eternal enjoyment of God" as "one end," yet in the end he nevertheless subordinates happiness, "as a means leading to" the glory of God:

If it be enquired with what propriety these may both be called chief and highest, the answer is obvious and easy, viz. That the former is absolutely so, beyond which nothing more excellent or desirable can be conceived; the latter is the highest or best *in its kind*, which, notwithstanding, is referred, *as a means leading to the other*; and both these ends, which with this distinction, we call chief and highest, are to be particularly considered by us, together with the connexion that there is between them.¹²³

For the sake of naming these two ends "*one...chief and highest*," Ridgely makes glorifying God the "absolute" or "chief" end, and the enjoyment of God the "highest or best in its kind," the "means" to the absolute chief end of glorifying God, effectively subordinating human happiness. The enjoyment of God is the

¹²² Leigh, quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 447 (emphasis added).

¹²³ Ridgely, *A Body of Divinity*, Vol. I (London, 1731-33), 13 (emphasis added).

highest end of its kind, however, it represents a “means leading to” God’s glory, and therefore of subordinate teleological status.

Samuel Willard of Boston, who “found no room for Amesian thought,”¹²⁴ is eager to promote Christian happiness, and yet, similar to Ridgely, he subordinates human happiness to the glory of God in his famous lectures on the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* (1687-1706), which are posthumously published in 1726 as *A Compleat Body of Divinity*.¹²⁵ This massively influential tome, which is owned by both Edwards and his father,¹²⁶ became, according to Holifield, “the authoritative text in American Reformed theology for the next half century.”¹²⁷ In its opening page, Willard states: “the great thing which all rational and immortal creatures have to be mostly inquisitive about, is HAPPINESS,”¹²⁸ continuing, “It is of infinite concernment, that we be rightly fixed on the object of worship; for if it be not such an one as can make us happy, our religion is in vain.”¹²⁹ In his *Mercy Magnified*, Willard emphasizes the teleological import of happiness: “Man’s great business which he hath in this life to trade for, is happiness. It is that which every man ought to aim at.”¹³⁰ Although, in the end, Willard also subordinates happiness relative to the glory of God in his *Compleat Body of Divinity*: “Man was made for an end, viz. to glorify God; and in subordination thereto, to seek and obtain blessedness.”¹³¹ Thus, the subordination of happiness relative to God’s glory is prevalent in England, and in Edwards’s Colonial America, as Holifield observes in his *Theology in America*, “Calvinists had, like medieval theology, held up the glory of God and that happiness was important, but that the happiness of the creature was

¹²⁴ Eusden, “Introduction,” *Marrow*, 11.

¹²⁵ Holifield, *Theology in America*, 65.

¹²⁶ Edwards, *WJE* 26, 199.

¹²⁷ Holifield, *Theology in America*, 62. See also Ernest Benson Lowrie, *The Shape of the Puritan Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 3.

¹²⁸ Lowrie, *Shape of the Puritan Mind*, 24-5.

¹²⁹ Willard, quoted by Lowrie, *Shape of the Puritan Mind*, 47.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, 226.

¹³¹ *Ibid*, 96.

subordinate to the glory of God.”¹³² While Edwards does not explicitly engage the issue of the “subordination” of happiness until 1729-30, he is likely aware of this Reformed tendency during the earliest stages of his career, just as he is aware of the non-Calvinist Enlightenment subordination of happiness.

The teleological subordination of happiness in the Puritan and Reformed context, therefore, further supports my thesis that Edwards is concerned to defend the teleological status of happiness, rather than the glory of God. Edwards always assumes a high view of God’s glory, but the burden of his project is to rescue happiness, which is particularly demonstrated by Misc. 3, “Happiness is the End of the Creation.” Misc. 3, written in the spring of 1723, represents Edwards’s first explicit theological proof of happiness as ultimate *telos*, which teleology he continues to develop throughout 1723, culminating with Misc. 87, “Happiness,” which launches his career-spanning project to defend happiness as ultimate *telos* as thoroughly orthodox from a Reformed biblical and Trinitarian perspective.

2.3.6 “Happiness is the End of the Creation”

Immediately after writing an extensive entry on the “Covenant of Grace,” wherein Edwards rejects the notion that creaturely righteousness, or “virtue,” be considered a “condition of happiness,”¹³³ Edwards asserts in Misc. 3 that, just as happiness is a gift of *redemption*, it is likewise a gift of God’s goodness from the perspective of *creation*, and therefore, must represent ultimate *telos*. Drawing upon Reformed doctrine that Edwards states recently in Misc. ww, “’Twas alone the goodness of God that moved him to make the world, that moves him to preserve it; and all God’s providential proceedings are upon the feet of goodness,”¹³⁴ he establishes his teleology of happiness in Misc. 3 on the basis of *God’s goodness*:

¹³² Holifield, *Theology in America*, 88.

¹³³ Edwards, Misc. 2, *WJE* 13, 197-99.

¹³⁴ Edwards, Misc. ww, *WJE* 13, 193.

Happiness is the End of Creation, as appears by this, because the creation had as good not be, as not rejoice in its being. For certainly it was the goodness of the Creator that moved him to create; and how can we conceive of another end proposed by goodness, than that he might delight in seeing the creatures he made rejoice in that being that he has given them?¹³⁵

First, Edwards believes with his Reformed peers that “it was the goodness of the Creator that moved him to create.”¹³⁶ Benedict Pictet, who trained under Francis Turretin, writes that “goodness” is “that affection in God, by which he inclined to communicate himself to his creatures...The first act of God’s goodness in time is creation.”¹³⁷ Likewise, Charnock argues that of all the divine attributes, God’s goodness is “the motive and end of his creation of things.”¹³⁸ Wendelin states similarly that the first “free” communication of God’s goodness to his creatures is “through creation.”¹³⁹

Next, Edwards deduces that God’s “end proposed by goodness,” must be “happiness,” that, “he might *delight* in seeing the creatures he made *rejoice*.” If goodness moved God to create, then happiness must be the end of creation, another doctrine common to the Reformed tradition, as with William Bates, who writes, “only free and unexcited goodness moved him to create all things, that he might impart being and happiness to the creature...”¹⁴⁰ God’s goodness, by its very nature, aims to “impart” happiness, and therefore, Edwards is able to anchor his teleological proof in the Reformed doctrine of the goodness of God in creation: If God’s creation was motivated by his goodness, then the happiness of the creation must be the ultimate goal.

¹³⁵ Edwards, Misc. 3, *WJE* 13, 199 (emphasis added). This statement is another example of the overlap between such terms as happiness, delight, and joy, or rejoicing: The “delight” of God and ‘rejoicing’ of the creature fulfill Edwards’s thesis that, “*Happiness is the End of the Creation.*”

¹³⁶ Heinrich Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics Set out and Illustrated from the Sources* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1950), 195.

¹³⁷ Benedict Pictet, quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 509.

¹³⁸ Charnock, *Existence and Attributes of God*, Vol. II, 228-29.

¹³⁹ Markus Friedrich Wendelin, quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 509.

¹⁴⁰ Bates, *Harmony of the Divine Attributes*, 6-7.

Thirdly, Edwards provides further support for his teleology of happiness by utilising the doctrine of the glory of God *ad extra*: “Happiness is the end of the creation,” writes Edwards, “appears also by this, because the end of the creation is that the creation might glorify him.” And, “what is glorifying God, but a rejoicing at that glory he has displayed?”¹⁴¹ Since, according to Edwards “glorifying God” is represented by the creature “rejoicing” at God’s glory, the high teleological status of the divine glory is retained and argues for, rather than against, happiness as ultimate *telos*, which makes it difficult to understand why McClymond and McDermott consider Misc. 3 “surprising in light of the later *End of Creation*”:

In the initial phase, Edwards maintained the view – surprising in light of the later *End of Creation* – that human happiness *per se* was God’s ultimate end in creating.¹⁴²

Misc. 3 is “surprising” to these scholars because they misinterpret Edwards’s stance. Edwards does not exclude the teleological import of God’s glory to argue that “human happiness *per se*” is God’s ultimate end in creation. The relationship of glory and happiness might not yet be thoroughly explained by Edwards, but the status of the divine glory is certainly not diminished. Rather, the high teleological status of God’s glory is central to Edwards’s argument: “Happiness is the end of the creation...appears also by this, because the end of the creation is that the creation might glorify him.” In order to explain their assertion, these authors devise the following theory: “Later Edwards noticed the biblical teaching that God created the world for his own “name,” “glory,” or “praise,”¹⁴³ implying that Edwards is ignorant of his tradition’s high teleological view of the glory of God during this “initial phase,” which lasts from the time he

¹⁴¹ Edwards, Misc. 3, *WJE* 13, 199-200.

¹⁴² McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 213.

¹⁴³ *Ibid*, 11.

writes Misc. 3 in 1723 until the 1727-28 timeframe, which is entirely unlikely, as well as explicitly refuted by this text.

This point is important, due to the fact that this misreading has the effect of devaluing and minimising Edwards's project regarding happiness, which is made to look like a strange mistake or oversight, arising from a "surprising" and temporary intellectual phase. Certainly Edwards's thought develops, but not in the way these scholars imagine. Edwards's thesis about happiness as ultimate *telos* in 1723 already assumes a robust, albeit not fully explained, doctrine of the glory of God, which makes his argument for happiness all the more significant. Since Edwards's teleological conviction about happiness cannot be explained away by ignorance, nor as temporary, it is, therefore, plausible that happiness as ultimate *telos*, indeed, God-glorifying happiness as *telos*, represents the central thesis and enduring purpose of Edwards's "end of creation" project.

Furthermore, it is likely that from Edwards's perspective, the glory of God is *implied* by Edwards's doctrine of the goodness of God in Misc. 3. Reformed theologians assume an intimate relationship between, not only God's goodness and the creature's happiness, but also God's goodness and God's glory, as with Charnock, who writes, "the ends of his goodness," are the creature's "felicity, as well as His glory."¹⁴⁴ Charnock writes, furthermore, "The goodness of God is his inclination to deal well and bountifully with his creatures...whereby he wills there should be something besides himself for his own glory."¹⁴⁵ Thus, the happiness-producing communicative goodness of God represents the *ad extra* manifest glory of God for Charnock. The "ultimate end" of God is "himself, and his own goodness":

...the manifestation of himself and the riches of his nature; not to make himself blessed, but to discover his own blessedness to his creatures, and to communicate something of it to them.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ Charnock, *Existence and Attributes of God*, Vol. II, 228.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, 219.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, 229.

Put yet another way, Charnock says that the goodness of God “comprehends all his attributes...His goodness is his glory and Godhead, as much as is delightfully visible to his creatures, and whereby he doth benefit man.”¹⁴⁷ The communication of God’s goodness is “the manifestation of himself,” i.e. his *ad extra* glory, “whereby” God communicates his blessedness, this delight and happiness, to the creature, which makes sense of Edwards’s “surprising” statement about goodness and happiness, because these things represent the glory of God. That is, the communication of the goodness of God *ad extra* means happiness for the creature - *and glory to the Creator* - which provides even more reason to believe that Edwards has the glory of God at the forefront of his mind (and doctrine) as he articulates *happiness* as ultimate *telos*, i.e. “happiness is the end of the creation.”

It is also important to see that Edwards argues not only for human happiness as ultimate *telos*, but also the divine happiness, on the basis of God’s goodness in creation: “How can we conceive of another end proposed by goodness, *than that he might delight* in seeing the creatures he made rejoice in that being that he has given them?”¹⁴⁸ God’s goodness implies God’s *delight*, which doctrine becomes central to Edwards’s defense of his teleology from a Reformed perspective, as Chapters 3 and 5 will demonstrate. This teaching is also present in Charnock, who writes that God’s goodness, “as it stands in relation to his creatures, it is that perfection of God whereby he delights in his works, and is beneficial to them.”¹⁴⁹ In fact, Charnock weaves the goodness, glory, and delight of God together into a unity derived from the Scriptures:

Moses desired to see his glory, God assures him he should see his goodness (Exod. Xxxiii.); intimating that his goodness is his glory, and his glory his delight also.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, 220.

¹⁴⁸ Edwards, Misc. 3, *WJE* 13, 199 (emphasis added).

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, 219.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, 227.

Therefore, when the Reformed background is fully appreciated and the text of Misc. 3 is carefully read, we are able to see that for Edwards, the high teleological status of the happiness of the creature is intimately bound up with the *ad extra* expression of the goodness, glory, and happiness of God, which reveals Misc. 3 as far more theocentric and doctrinally robust than has been appreciated by the scholarship. Thus, Misc. 3, “Happiness is the end of the creation,” should carry far more weight and enduring value with respect to the interpretation of Edwards’s entire teleological project.

Lastly, Edwards reveals a source of tension with respect to the subjective activity of happiness in Misc. 3, between the knowledge of God and joy in God, which, I will suggest, represents some of the motivation and purpose for Edwards’s famous essay, “Excellency,” written soon after Misc. 3 and just prior to Misc. 87. Edwards writes, “An understanding of the perfections of God, merely, cannot be the end of the creation; for he as good as not understand it, as see it and not be at all moved with joy at the sight.”¹⁵¹ Up to this point, Edwards has articulated an intellectualist foundation for his teleology, i.e. the “contemplation” of God by “intelligent beings.” However, now that he has explicitly named “the end of creation” the “happiness” of *joy*, or *rejoicing*, rather than “understanding,” Edwards is left with some explaining to do regarding the relationship between knowledge and happiness. Perhaps already planning to pick up on this later (as he does in “Excellency”) and thus, temporarily satisfied, Edwards is willing to conclude with an exclamation that reveals how close this teleology of happiness is to his heart and experience:

Wherefore, seeing happiness is the highest end of the creation of the universe, and intelligent beings are that consciousness of the creation that is to be the immediate subject of this happiness, how happy may we conclude will be those intelligent beings that are to be made eternally happy!¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ Edwards, Misc. 3, *WJE* 13, 200.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

In this important entry, Edwards provides his first explicit articulation of his teleology of happiness. Inspired perhaps by Charnock, Edwards begins to articulate an intimate relationship between the glory of God, the happiness of God, the goodness of God, and the happiness of the creature, for the sake of proving, “happiness is the end of the creation.” Edwards’s agenda is not to prove the supremacy of the glory of God, yet he nonetheless maintains the teleological import of the glory of God. In order to prove happiness as ultimate *telos*, Edwards draws from his own Reformed theological tradition, primarily the doctrines of the goodness of God and glory of God. God’s goodness is ultimately for happiness, and the Reformed *telos* of God glorified *ad extra* consists of the joy and happiness of the creature. Therefore, Edwards’s declaration of happiness as ultimate *telos* in Misc. 3 represents a crucial, theologically robust and, as I will demonstrate, enduring teleological statement. It represents a response to the emerging non-Calvinist Enlightenment trend to make virtue and usefulness, rather than contemplation and the beatific enjoyment of God, ultimate *telos*, and while Edwards is not explicit about his concern about the Reformed subordination of happiness for several more years, he is undoubtedly aware of this context. Thus, in Misc. 3, “Happiness is the End of the Creation,” Edwards utilizes the resources of the Reformed tradition to clarify and bolster his teleological convictions, and prove his teleology of happiness against these rival schemes.

2.3.7 *The Happiness of “Excellency”*

Scholars have offered various opinions regarding the purpose and significance of Edwards’s famous essay, “Excellency,” written in the fall of 1723 in his philosophical notebook, *The Mind*, yet none adequately appreciate happiness as ultimate *telos* as a primary motivating purpose for this important work. Marsden believes it represents Edwards’s effort to explain “beauty” for the

sake of understanding the “harmony of all things.”¹⁵³ Wallace Anderson has pioneered the reading that claims Edwards establishes a novel metaphysical theory, a “relational ontology,” that causes him to break with the Reformed tradition.¹⁵⁴ Bombaro has emphasized Edwards’s establishment of the ontological structure of “intelligent perceiving beings” for the sake of a narrative of divine glory.¹⁵⁵ Other commentators argue that “Excellency” is written for the sake of Edwards’s doctrine of God, as McClymond and McDermott write, “Edwards’s reflections on metaphysics represented an implicit argument for God.”¹⁵⁶ Crisp likewise argues that the “understanding of divine excellency leads to his doctrine of the Trinity,” that “excellency in particular functions as a sort of conceptual bridge between his theology proper and his doctrine of the Trinity.”¹⁵⁷

Two scholars point out the teleological significance of the essay. Holifield asserts that Edwards’s analysis of excellency leads him to see that, “The ultimate end of creation was *not human happiness*, but the diffusion of God’s “excellent fullness” for its own sake,”¹⁵⁸ however a *significantly* more helpful commentary is offered by Bombaro:

Here we have the final application of Edwards’s post-conversion agenda, namely, to redefine all existence (this time with man in view) in light of God’s goal-oriented, comprehensive reality.¹⁵⁹

Indeed, “Excellency” should be interpreted in light of Edwards’s teleological project, which is (inconveniently for Holifield) articulated at the time he writes

¹⁵³ Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 78.

¹⁵⁴ Anderson claims that “Excellency” establishes “the principle that being itself consists in *relations*,” a “very different view of the formal and intelligible structure of reality from any that had been developed by the major philosophers of the seventeenth century, and even by those of his own time.” Anderson, “Editor’s Introduction,” *WJE* 6, 84, 85. Several influential scholars have followed Anderson’s interpretation, including most notably, Sang Lee. See Lee, *Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 78-79.

¹⁵⁵ Bombaro, *Jonathan Edwards’s Vision of Reality*, 14, 133.

¹⁵⁶ McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 165.

¹⁵⁷ Crisp, *Jonathan Edwards on God and Creation*, 96.

¹⁵⁸ E. Brooks Holifield, “Edwards as Theologian,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, 149.

¹⁵⁹ Bombaro, *Jonathan Edwards’s Vision of Reality*, 134.

“Excellency” as “happiness is the end of the creation.” Thus, I am suggesting that Edwards’s metaphysics of “excellency” particularly serves his definition of the *object* of happiness (excellency, i.e., God) and therefore, the precise *nature* of happiness (the perception of excellency, i.e. knowing God) for the sake of proving his foundationally intellectualist teleology of happiness, which is soon after demonstrated by Misc. 87, “Happiness.”

The internal context of the essay is important to identifying Edwards’s purpose. After the flurry of activity around the theme of happiness and God’s “end of creation” during the first half of 1723 leading up to Misc. 3, a good deal of time passes before Edwards grapples with this theme again (over 6 months and 75 Miscellanies entries). While Edwards has established his basic theological framework for his teleology of happiness based on the goodness and glory of God in Misc. 3, by late 1723 Edwards seeks to bolster and clarify his teleological convictions by pursuing a metaphysical analysis of excellency and happiness with the essay “Excellency,” as Anderson comments:

Edwards turned his attention to the examination of the concepts of excellency, harmony, and proportion which began to play a prominent role in his discussion of the relations of God to his creation and the ends for which he created it.¹⁶⁰

Indeed, “Excellency” is written for the sake of clarifying the articulation of his teleology. As I will demonstrate, by working out a philosophical definition of excellency, Edwards establishes both the objective and subjective nature of happiness in philosophical terms, which will fortify his ‘final’ proof in Misc. 87, written immediately after “Excellency.” While Misc. 3 anchors its argument for happiness as ultimate *telos* in theological terms, that is, the teleological nature of the goodness and glory of God, which explains the object of happiness as God’s glory and the subject as rejoicing, happy creature, “Excellency” pursues a stronger (metaphysical) case for the happiness of “intelligent beings” as ultimate *telos* with respect to the unresolved tension between knowledge and happiness.

¹⁶⁰ Anderson, “Editor’s Introduction,” *WJE* 6, 80.

Edwards wants to answer the question: How is *happiness* the ultimate *telos* of *contemplating* God and his glory? “Excellency” pursues the answer to this question by establishing the *object* of happiness (excellency, i.e. God¹⁶¹) and the *nature* of happiness (perception, i.e. contemplation) in metaphysical terms, which will enhance and fortify the proof of Edwards’s teleology in Misc. 87, which is, recall, built on two pillars: First, the goodness of God, and second, in the tradition of the beatific *contemplation* of God, the *perception* of God’s excellency, which is happiness. “Excellency,” therefore, provides the metaphysical underpinnings for this latter teleological pillar.

Even the opening paragraph of “Excellency” reveals that Edwards has happiness in mind. More than a definition *per se* of excellency, Edwards is interested in what it is about excellency that produces happiness:

Some have said that all excellency is harmony, symmetry or proportion; but they have not yet explained it. *We would know why proportion is more excellent than disproportion, that is, why proportion is pleasant to the mind* and disproportion unpleasant.¹⁶²

Edwards seeks to understand why excellency is “pleasant to the mind.” In other words, asking: What is it about excellency that makes intelligent beings happy?¹⁶³ Therefore, in addition to the context of Misc. 3 and especially Misc. 87, the text itself indicates that comprehending happiness is what motivates the essay, “Excellency.”

Edwards’s “universal definition of excellency” (among spiritual beings) is articulated in terms of “consent,” i.e. love: “The consent of being to being, or being’s consent to entity. The more the consent is, and the more extensive, the

¹⁶¹ Crisp argues, regarding Edwards’s definition of excellency in terms of consent: “As far as Edwards is concerned, the only being this can be predicated of *is God*.” Crisp, *Jonathan Edwards on God and Creation*, 99.

¹⁶² Edwards, “Excellency,” *WJE* 6, 332.

¹⁶³ The language of “pleasant,” “pleasing,” or “pleasedness” appears to represent this essay’s philosophical language related to the “excellency” of harmony and proportion, whereas the term “happiness” (which is utilized later in the conclusion) is theological, relating to *spiritual* pleasure derived from *spiritual* excellence associated with *spiritual* consent, love - and God.

greater the excellency.”¹⁶⁴ “The highest excellency, therefore, must be consent of spirits one to another,” writes Edwards, just prior to his concluding statement that defines “happiness”:

Happiness, strictly, consists in the perception of these three things: of the consent of being to its own being; of its own consent to being; and of being’s consent to being.¹⁶⁵

“Happiness,” Edwards concludes the essay, is the perception of this perfect matrix of “consent,” i.e. “the ‘highest excellency.’” While Lee claims that “by ‘happiness’ Edwards means the knowledge and love of beauty,”¹⁶⁶ what Edwards actually says is that happiness is “perception,” the perception of the greatest “excellency,” and as Crisp points out, this excellency can only be true of the Triune God.¹⁶⁷ Thus, Edwards has provided the metaphysical basis for defining happiness as the perception of excellency, i.e. God, which, again, will serve his teleological proof in Misc. 87. Bombaro and Lee argue that Edwards’s happiness definition is primarily about the ontological structure of a human being,¹⁶⁸ but as Crisp says, Edwards’s “understanding of the divine excellency leads to his doctrine of the Trinity,” which would indicate that Edwards is explaining the metaphysics of happiness in the Triune God, i.e. the beatific vision.

Taking one step further, in light of the context of Edwards’s teleological writings, Edwards’s metaphysics of divine excellency (and happiness) appears to most ultimately serve his teleology of happiness. As Edwards will write in

¹⁶⁴ Edwards, “Excellency,” *WJE* 6, 336.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 337-38. It is exceedingly significant that it is *a definition of happiness* that satisfies Edwards’s pen. “Excellency” is clearly not an isolated work aimed merely at defining *excellency*.

¹⁶⁶ Lee, *Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 85.

¹⁶⁷ Crisp, *Jonathan Edwards on God and Creation*, 99: “For a being to be truly, or supremely excellent, it must consent to (other) being(s) in a maximal way. And for a being to do this, it must be perceived as the greatest instance of harmony and the maximal harmony of the whole at the same time. As far as Edwards is concerned, the only being this can be predicated of is God.”

¹⁶⁸ Lee, *Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 85-86; Bombaro, *Jonathan Edwards’s Vision of Reality*, 139.

Misc. 87: "Yea, he is nothing but excellency; and all that he does, nothing but excellent," *and therefore*, happiness is the perception of "what God is and does," which proves his teleology of happiness:

'Tis evident that the end of man's creation must needs be happiness....appears also from the nature of happiness, which is the perception of excellency; for intelligent beings are created to be the consciousness of the universe, that they may perceive what God is and does.¹⁶⁹

In sum, "Excellency" accomplishes the metaphysical explanation of the *object* of happiness, i.e. God, in terms of excellency, so that the happiness of intelligent beings might be comprehended in terms of excellency, for the sake of a more philosophically robust proof of his teleology, as ultimately revealed in Misc. 87. Edwards had, for the sake of his teleology of happiness, established the straightforward notion that intelligent beings perform the intellectual function of being the "consciousness of the creation," yet Edwards had not explained *how* this "consciousness" translates into happiness. Edwards had given *theological* expression to this dynamic, i.e. *rejoicing* at the glory of God, however, he had not provided the sufficient philosophical explanation for the manner by which the "consciousness of the creation" is "the immediate subject of this *happiness*."

Thus, for the sake of his teleology, Edwards explains why excellency "is pleasant to the mind," resolving the tension of Misc. 3 and providing the metaphysics necessary to make *happiness* "the end of the creation" of intelligent beings, especially as the ultimate object of the creature's intelligence is the most excellent being, God, as Edwards writes, "Yea, he is nothing but excellency; and all that he does, nothing but excellent."¹⁷⁰ "Excellency," therefore, enables Edwards in Misc. 87, "Happiness," to assert that the "end of the creation" is the *happiness* of intellectual beings, who *receive* the communicative goodness of God by *perceiving* the "excellency" of God.

¹⁶⁹ Edwards, Misc. 87, *WJE* 13, 252.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

2.3.8 “The End of Man’s Creation Must Needs Be Happiness”

Misc. 87, “Happiness,” represents the intellectual bookend to Edwards’s post-conversion era marked by extensive theological and philosophical effort aimed at proving “happiness is the end of the creation.” The entry represents the culmination of his previous writings directed toward the demonstration that the nature of both God’s goodness and human happiness necessarily imply that “the end of man’s creation must needs be happiness.” First, God’s communicative goodness implies that the happiness of intelligent being is ultimate *telos*. Edwards restates his long held conviction about this implication of the goodness of God in creation:

Tis evident that the end of man’s creation must needs be happiness, from the motive of God’s creating the world, which could be nothing else but his goodness.¹⁷¹

According to the very nature of goodness, the goal of God’s goodness must be happiness. If the creation exists due to the goodness of God, happiness must be the *telos* of the creation.

Edwards’s next move is particularly noteworthy with respect to my thesis. While Edwards certainly agrees with the high teleological status of the glory of God *ad extra*, his efforts are, nevertheless observed to be particularly aimed at making God’s goodness, *rather* than the glory of the divine perfections, the motive of creation. Indeed, Edwards pushes back on the common Reformed stance that the goal of creation is the manifestation of the glory of God’s perfections:

If it be said that the end of man’s creation might be that He might manifest his power, wisdom, holiness or justice, so I say too. But the question is, why God would make known his power, wisdom, etc. What could move him to will, that there should be some beings that might know his power and wisdom? It could be nothing else but his goodness.¹⁷²

¹⁷¹ Edwards, Misc. 87, *WJE* 13, 251.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

Only the divine *goodness* is capable of representing God's motive to create, because God's goodness (*unlike* God's power or wisdom) implies no greater, or further, end. "The notion of *goodness*," writes Edwards, is simply "an inclination to show *goodness*," but "God's power," on the other hand, "is shown no otherwise than by his powerfully bringing about some end," and, "the very notion of wisdom is, wisely contriving for an end." Thus, the manifestation of divine attributes such as wisdom or power is not able to represent an ultimate end, nor, therefore, the original motive of creation. Goodness, however, is not for the sake of anything else; goodness is for goodness (i.e. making happy), and therefore, only God's goodness can represent God's original motive, meaning the happiness of the intelligent being is the ultimate end of creation:

Wherefore, if God created the world merely from goodness, every whit of this goodness must necessarily ultimately terminate in the consciousness of the creation; for the world is no other way capable of receiving goodness in any measure. But intelligent beings are the consciousness of the world; the end, therefore, of their creation must necessarily be that they may receive the goodness of God, that is, that they may be happy.¹⁷³

By these comments, Edwards takes a stand against the Reformed tradition's theocentric interpretation of God's end in creation as merely the display of God's perfections and glory. Thus, Edwards is clearly not intent to demonstrate the manifestation of God's glory *per se* as ultimate *telos*. Rather, Edwards deems the radically theocentric trend of the Reformed tradition mistaken, even as he has opposed the radically pragmatic teleology of the Enlightenment as misguided, determined to prove that *happiness* is the ultimate end of God's creation.

Again, Edwards is not unconcerned with the glory of God, the high teleological status of which he remains convinced. An initial draft of Misc. 87 includes the following: "In What sense the highest End of all things is the Glory

¹⁷³ Ibid, 252.

of God.”¹⁷⁴ Edwards understands there is a “sense” in which “the glory of God” is the highest end of the creation, and he is convinced that spiritual happiness explains that “sense.” Edwards’s primary motivation during this period is neither the demonstration of happiness as the end of creation in such a way that ignores, or subordinates, the glory of God, as McClymond, McDermott, and Schultz imply, nor is it the demonstration of the supremacy of the glory, or excellency, of God in such a way that subordinates happiness, as Holifield has argued. Rather, Edwards means to explain *the happiness of the creature* as “the sense” in which “the glory of God” is the highest end of the creation.

Secondly, as introduced by our discussion of Edwards’s important essay, “Excellency,” Misc. 87 argues that the nature of happiness, “the perception of excellency,” also proves happiness as ultimate *telos*. Since the “nature of happiness” is “the perception of excellency,” i.e. the perception of God, Edwards reasons that happiness must be the “end of man’s creation.”¹⁷⁵

It (happiness as “the end of man’s creation”) appears also from the nature of happiness, which is the perception of excellency; for intelligent beings are created to be the consciousness of the universe, they they may perceive what God is and does. This can be nothing else but to perceive the excellency of what he is and does. Yea, he is nothing but excellency; and all that he does, nothing but excellent.¹⁷⁶

By establishing a definition of happiness in “Excellency” that fits his teleology of divine goodness communicated to intelligent beings, Edwards is able to confirm that the *nature* of happiness necessarily implies the *ultimate teleological status* of happiness. That is, since knowledge of the creation represents the functional *telos* of intelligent beings, the perception of the excellency of God, i.e.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, 252, n. 7.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, 252.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid (parenthesis added). This definition of happiness also surfaces in a sermon written during this time, which represents further evidence of its significance to Edwards: “Happiness and delight of soul arise always from the sight or apprehension of something that appears excellent....There is very great delight the Christian enjoys in the sight he has of the glory and excellency of God.” Edwards, *The Pleasantness of Religion*, WJE 14, 108.

happiness, must, in light of God's communicative goodness, represent ultimate *telos*. Therefore, Misc. 87, "Happiness," represents the culmination of two and a half years of experiential, philosophical, metaphysical, and theological development regarding the goodness and excellency of God, and the spiritual happiness of intelligent beings, for the sake of proving that the happiness of the beatific enjoyment of God "must needs be" the ultimate *telos* of God's creation.

2.4 Conclusion

The formative post-conversion period of Jonathan Edwards's life and career is, as I have shown, particularly marked by an intense and coordinated effort to defend and prove his teleology, "happiness is the end of the creation." His conversion and early religious experience are dominated by a new spiritual happiness that motivates Edwards to explore its teleological significance in his philosophical and theological notebooks, and by the end of 1723, Edwards is able to articulate his settled conviction on the matter in Misc. 87. Edwards's view that the creation exists due to the goodness of God leads him to conclude that the communication of that goodness must explain the ultimate *telos* of the creation, which must be happiness, due to the nature of goodness. Edwards's teleology of happiness is furthermore proven by his definition of happiness as the perception of the excellency of God, the functional *telos* of intelligent beings.

Notwithstanding his commitment to the teleological import of the glory of God, Edwards leaves much to explain regarding this doctrine. It is clear that God's glory and human happiness do not stand in opposition but represent, rather, a sort of unity. However, at the same time the *ad extra* glory, or "excellency," of God represents the *object* of the creature's happiness, the creature's *subjective* happiness represents "glorifying God," therefore the reconciliation of human happiness and divine glory remains unclear. Furthermore, Edwards has not explicitly integrated the redemptive historical perspective, yet various soteriological themes, especially union with Christ and happiness as the ultimate *telos* of the gospel, appear to have bolstered his

confidence in his teleology of happiness. Edwards has established a coherent teleological statement based on general Reformed theological doctrines, especially the communicative goodness of God, as well as philosophical and teleological principles related to the happiness of intelligent beings perceiving the excellency of God. Although, Edwards has not yet thoroughly defended his teleology from the perspective of a Reformed and Trinitarian orthodoxy, which project begins immediately after Misc. 87, as the following three chapters will demonstrate.

Lastly, Edwards's teleological vision develops and takes shape in response to the rival Enlightenment view that practical virtue, or usefulness toward the common good, is the purpose of the universe, and with an awareness of the tendency of the Reformed to exalt the teleological status of divine glory at the expense of human happiness, which views Edwards counters, revealing his agenda to defend the teleological status of *happiness*. Therefore, Edwards does not begin his career particularly bent on 'discovering' God's "end of creation," nor on proving the teleological status of the glory of God in face of an anthropocentric Enlightenment, but, rather on proving *spiritual happiness* in the tradition of the beatific vision as ultimate *telos* in the face of the rival teleological visions of both non-Calvinist Enlightenment *philosophes* and Puritan and Reformed divines.

Chapter 3: The Happiness of God

3.1 Introduction

Having established his teleological proof based on the most general philosophical and theological terms with Misc. 87, “Happiness,” in late-1723, Edwards subsequently turns his attention toward the project that will last his entire career, the defense of his teleology of happiness within a thoroughly Trinitarian and Reformed orthodox framework. The doctrine of the happiness of God and the Trinity grounds Edwards’s initial efforts in this regard. Throughout the 1720s, Edwards utilises this doctrine to accomplish several things for the sake of reconciling his teleology with Reformed orthodoxy. First, in order to maintain happiness as ultimate *telos*, Edwards explains that the creation is “for God” on the basis of God’s happiness, rather than God’s glory. Second, the infinite *ad intra* happiness of the Triune God is established in order to protect the aseity of God in light of that divine happiness in relation to the creation. The infinite and eternal happiness of the “Trinity” of Misc. 94 not only protects Edwards’s God against the charge of dependence on the creation, but it furthermore, establishes the source and definition of happiness in specifically Trinitarian terms. Edwards also defines the *ad intra* goodness of God in terms of happiness for the sake of this teleological framework. Lastly, Edwards’s doctrine of the Holy Spirit, which follows from his doctrine of the Trinity, explains the source of spiritual happiness for his teleology by its unique integration of delight and happiness. Edwards’s development of these various doctrinal aspects of the happiness of God will demonstrate that the overriding agenda and dominant purpose of these important theological texts is the establishment of a thoroughly Reformed and Trinitarian defense of Edwards’s teleology of happiness.

3.2 God’s Happiness and the “End of the Creation”

As Edwards further considers the implications of his teleology of happiness from a Reformed perspective, his first concern is maintaining a rigorously theocentric view of creation in light of the high teleological status of human happiness in his framework. Edwards's first step in dealing with this concern is to utilize the doctrine of the happiness of God in the place of the traditional, glory of God, which, as I will demonstrate, reveals Edwards's particular commitment to happiness as ultimate *telos*.

Edwards's concluding comment of the initial version of Misc. 87, "In what sense the highest end of all things is the glory of God," is indicative of his concern expressed by the question of Misc. 92, "End of the Creation":

How then can it be said that God has made all things for himself, if it is certain that the highest end of the creation was the communication of happiness?¹

The traditional answer might have been that all things are made for "the glory of God," which Reformed doctrine, according to Dolf te Velde, "identifies God as the final cause of everything, both of his own actions and of his creatures' life."² However, Edwards chooses to explain the theocentric nature of his doctrine of creation *on the basis of the happiness, or "complacence,"³ of God*: "It can be said that God has made all things for himself," writes Edwards, in that God is *happy* in the communication of happiness:

I answer, that which is done for the gratifying of a natural inclination of God, may very properly be said to be done for God. God takes complacence in communicating felicity, and he made all things for this

¹ Edwards, Misc. 92, *WJE* 13, 256.

² Dolf te Velde, *Paths Beyond Tracing Out: The Connection of Method and Content in the Doctrine of God, Examined in Reformed Orthodoxy, Karl Barth, and the Utrecht School* (Delft: Eburon, 2010), 204. See also Muller, *PRRD*3, 550.

³ Recall that Muller argues that complacence (Latin: *complacencia*), which he translates as "self-fulfillment," is "used almost interchangeably" with various other terms for happiness, including *beatitudo* and *felicitas*. Boyson's analysis of seventeenth and eighteenth century writers admits the similar translation, "self-satisfaction." Boyson, *Wordsworth and the Enlightenment Idea of Pleasure*, 10-11.

complacence. His complacence in this, in making happy, was the end of creation. Rev. 4:11, “For thy pleasure they are and were created.”⁴

That God is spoken of as “gratifying,” as Edwards says, “a natural inclination” (his goodness) by taking “complacence” in the communication of “felicity” to the creature is, as Holmes has stated, “heart-warming but dangerous,” due to the potential of making “God’s own happiness dependent on creation.”⁵ Edwards has already alluded to God’s “delight” in communicating happiness in Misc. 3, which is not uncommon to the Reformed tradition, yet, the assertion of Misc. 92 is bolder still, as it effectively replaces the manifest “glory of God” as the final goal of all things with the happiness of God, *relative to the creature*: “His complacence in this, in making happy.” Misc. 3 includes the glory of God, yet Misc. 92 appears to jettison the doctrine altogether, suggesting that the creation is “for God” in that it makes him *happy*. It must be asked: Why does Edwards make this unique and “dangerous” move?

While Holmes offers no explanation, McDermott argues that what explains Edwards’s move is the accommodation of “eighteenth century” ideas and opposition to the deist agenda:

Edwards refused to discard this notion – offensive to the deists – that God is truly delighted in and by his creation, particularly by its praise for him. He linked God’s happiness to goodness, as the eighteenth century required, but he never surrendered his conviction that the divine is personal, capable of delight.⁶

This interpretation misses the mark due to the fact that it misunderstands the context. Edwards is not following the requirements of Enlightenment philosophy and countering deist ideas about God. Rather, Edwards inherits these doctrines from his own Reformed (and medieval) tradition, and he is applying them for the sake of his teleological project. Charnock uses strikingly similar language under

⁴ Edwards, Misc. 92, *WJE* 13, 256.

⁵ Holmes, *God of Grace and God of Glory*, 37.

⁶ McDermott, *Jonathan Edwards Confronts the Gods*, 91.

the heading, “This goodness is communicative with the greatest pleasure,” Charnock writes:

He lays up his goodness in order to laying it out with a *complacency* wholly divine... *What God gives out of goodness, he gives with joy and gladness.*⁷

Furthermore, the language both Edwards and Charnock employ, of divine *complacence*, “the contentment (*complacencia*) that God receives from his delight,” is also found in Thomas Adams’s seventeenth century doctrine of divine blessedness.⁸ As with Edwards and Charnock, Adams’s *complacencia* is particularly associated with God’s goodness: “Thus, God “contemplates his own goodness, and rests in himself with a sweet complacency, as the infinite fountain of all blessedness.”⁹ Nevertheless, there is evidence of some controversy in Reformed circles in this regard, as John Gill’s discussion of divine goodness and complacence reveals:

Some talk of benevolence, by which God wishes or wills good to men; and then comes on a love of benevolence, and he does good to them; *and then a love of complacency, and delight takes place, and not til then. But this is to make God changeable.*¹⁰

For Gill, associating divine complacency and delight with the goodness of God makes God “changeable” and threatens God’s aseity. Again, McDermott explains Edwards’s bold move as a response to Enlightenment deism: “Lest deists rest Edwards highlighted what they typically omitted in their rather depersonalized accounts of the divine: God’s delight in the Creation.”¹¹ Certainly the deist context is not illegitimate, however, there is no evidence that the purpose of this doctrine is to counter the deist conception of God.

⁷ Charnock, *Existence and Attributes of God*, Vol. II, 227 (emphasis added).

⁸ Muller, *PRRD3*, 383.

⁹ Thomas Adams, quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 383.

¹⁰ John Gill, *Complete Body*, Vol. I, 117 (emphasis added).

¹¹ McDermott, *Jonathan Edwards Confronts the Gods*, 90.

Edwards's theological move, which exhibits both continuity and bold creativity with respect to the Reformed tradition, exists rather, in order to justify the notion that happiness is the "end of creation." Misc. 92 not only represents Edwards's first attempt to reckon with the Reformed tradition with respect to his teleology, it reveals a theological creativity that is particularly aimed at maintaining his high view of human happiness. By avoiding the doctrine of God's glory and speaking instead in terms of God's *happiness* as it relates to God's *ad extra* goodness and the happiness of the creature, Edwards avoids setting God's glory in opposition to human happiness, thus protecting happiness from subordination to God's glory. If Edwards had said that the creation is "for God," because making the creature happy *glorifies* him, the creature's happiness becomes subordinate to the glory of God, a means to an end, which is exactly what Edwards wants to avoid. By saying that the creation is "for God" in that God is *happy* making the creature happy, creaturely happiness escapes subordination, or the category of 'means.' The communication of happiness remains ultimate relative to God's glory, which is a point the scholarship appears to have missed.¹² Edwards is exploring a theological framework grounded in traditional Reformed doctrine that will protect the teleological status of happiness from its traditional subordination to the divine glory.

While we do think this move to substitute the happiness of God's goodness for the glory of God is quite unique, it should not be considered innovative, nor as a departure from the tradition. Edwards's theologising is inspired by his own tradition. Recall Charnock's association of the manifestation of God's *ad extra* glory with his *ad extra* goodness *and delight*: God's "goodness is his glory, and his glory his delight also."¹³ In other words, God is glorified in his creation through the joyful communication of his goodness. Therefore,

¹² See, for example, Holmes, *God of Grace and God of Glory*, 37: "Entry 92, written at a similar time (to Misc. 87), is a response to Rev. 4:11, 'For thy pleasure they are and were created.' How so?...if...happiness is the end of creation. The answer is simply that God enjoys making others happy."

¹³ Charnock, *Existence and Attributes of God*, Vol. II, 227.

especially as we remember the comment of Misc. 87: “In what sense the highest end of all things is the glory of God,” it appears that Misc. 87 and Misc. 92 are meant to describe, in terms of divine goodness and happiness, “in what sense the highest end of all things is the glory of God.” That the creation is “for God,” is articulated in terms of God’s goodness and happiness, rather than God’s glory, and this theological creativity emerges for the sake of maintaining the high teleological status of human happiness. Indeed, this method of describing the glory of God in terms of the happiness of God for the sake of his teleology of happiness will reemerge multiple times as Edwards’s defends his teleology from a Reformed perspective.

Therefore, Edwards’s work to articulate the “end of creation” is more than a philosophical query, whereby the brilliant theologian asks the ‘why’ question of creation, a reading imposed on the Edwards corpus by several scholars.¹⁴ Edwards is not trying to answer the ‘why’ question of creation *per se*, nor is he concerned to promote a high view of the glory of God, but rather, he is intentionally building a Reformed theological case for “happiness” as “the end of creation.” Edwards’s early *Miscellanies* entries on God’s end of creation do not represent a query, but rather *a specific agenda* – to demonstrate “happiness is the end of the creation” within a Reformed and Trinitarian orthodox framework. This agenda will endure his entire career, as will the burden of defending the orthodoxy of his doctrine of God in light of the “dangerous” articulation of Misc. 92, which threatens to make God’s happiness dependent on the creation.¹⁵ Thus, while Edwards has solved one problem, it seems he has created another. However, as Misc. 94, “Trinity” will reveal, Edwards gets to work immediately to defend an orthodox doctrine of God, and at the same time, he begins to

¹⁴ Holmes, *God of Grace and God of Glory*, 33; McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 207-210; Anri Morimoto, “The End for Which God Created Jonathan Edwards,” in *Jonathan Edwards as Contemporary: Essays in Honor of Sang Hyun Lee*, ed. Don Schweitzer (New York: Peter Lang, 2010), 33.

¹⁵ Holmes, *God of Grace and God of Glory*, 37.

establish the foundation of a Trinitarian articulation of his teleology, “happiness is the end of creation.”¹⁶

3.3 The Happiness of the Trinity

Edwards’s first attempt to work out his doctrine of the Trinity in Misc. 94, “Trinity,”¹⁷ accomplishes two things for the sake of his teleology, which appears to be the primary motivating factor of this notebook entry. First, in light of the way that Misc. 92 appears to jeopardise God’s self-sufficiency, independence, and freedom with respect to divine happiness in relation to the telic nature of God’s goodness *ad extra*, Edwards aims to establish the infinite and eternal nature of the happiness of God in terms of the Trinity *ad intra*. Second, Edwards begins to establish a Trinitarian structure for his Reformed teleology of happiness, especially in order to describe the *source* of that happiness in Trinitarian terms, i.e. the Holy Spirit. Thus, Edwards’s doctrine of the Trinity in Misc. 94 might reasonably be characterised as a doctrine of the *happiness* of the Trinity.¹⁸ In other words, the ultimate purpose of Misc. 94 does not appear to be the defense the Trinity *per se*, but rather, the articulation of *the happiness*

¹⁶ While he does not emphasise Edwards’s particular teleological agenda regarding *happiness*, Holmes’s “Trinitarian reading” of Edwards’s “end of creation” project represents a significant contribution. Holmes, *God of Grace and God of Glory*, 59, 34.

¹⁷ The scholarship tends to ignore Misc. 94, focusing instead on *Discourse on the Trinity*. For example, Strobel’s analysis is based entirely on the *Discourse*. This method is understandable, especially as the *Discourse* is more mature and complete *and* due to the fact that the *Discourse* largely repeats the fundamental tenets of the earlier *Miscellanies* entry. Yet, for this very reason, it might be argued that Misc. 94 (and its context) is essential to understanding the *Discourse* and Edwards’s Trinitarian theology. The high degree of continuity of Misc. 94 with the *Discourse* argues *for* the interpretive value of Misc. 94. Thus, the underappreciated elements of the content and purpose of Misc. 94 and its context (which my thesis strives to reveal) are crucial for understanding the *Discourse* (and related later writings).

¹⁸ As Perry Miller writes: “The student of Edwards must seek to ascertain not so much the peculiar doctrines in which he expressed his meaning as the meaning itself.” Miller, *Jonathan Edwards*, xvii.

of the Trinity for the sake of developing, in Trinitarian terms, his teleology of happiness.¹⁹

3.3.1 The Scholarship on Edwards's Trinity

Scholars offer a multitude of perspectives on what influences the shape and character of Edwards's doctrine of the Trinity. Crisp claims that Edwards's "understanding of divine excellency leads to his doctrine of the Trinity," by which "Edwards was principally concerned to uphold orthodoxy, recast in terms that would have been acceptable to the debates of the early Enlightenment."²⁰ Similarly, Studebaker and Caldwell assert that Edwards aims to "illustrate the reasonableness of a basically traditional model of the Trinity" in light of the British anti-trinitarian controversies.²¹ Strobel likewise claims that Edwards's doctrine is motivated and shaped by Trinitarian polemics, suggesting that Edwards is particularly concerned to reassert the personhood of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.²²

Amy Plantinga Pauw, Robert Jenson, and Sang Lee emphasise Edwards's "practical Trinitarianism," which is inherent to the Puritan and Reformed tradition.²³ Pauw also argues that the concept of excellency shapes

¹⁹ Edwards's framework in this regard is not entirely unique within the Puritan tradition. Roberts argues that Ralph Venning's "emphasis upon happiness is built upon his Trinitarian theology of the happiness of the Godhead." Roberts, *Puritanism and the Pursuit of Happiness*, 91.

²⁰ Crisp, *Jonathan Edwards on God and Creation*, 96, Crisp, *Jonathan Edwards Among the Theologians*, 42.

²¹ Studebaker and Caldwell, *Trinitarian Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 61.

²² Strobel writes, "...Edwards's concern, possibly his main concern, is to establish the Trinitarian personhood of God. Wanting to use personhood for polemical reasons, as shown below, Edwards affirms that God is personal and that the Son and the Spirit are both persons and divine in their own right." Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology*, 28. The antitrinitarian context is important, however this does not mean that Edwards's "main concern" should be interpreted as polemical and aimed at defending the doctrine of the Trinity *per se*. Nor should the structure of Edwards's Trinity be necessarily explained by the polemical context.

²³ These authors, especially Lee and Jenson, claim that Edwards "Practical Trinitarianism" is uniquely restorative. See Robert Jenson, *America's Theologian*, 93; Sang Hyun Lee, "Editor's Introduction," 31. However, "Practical Trinitarianism" is a

Edwards's doctrine, which she suggests is characterized by both the Augustinian mutual love and Victorine social models, in tension.²⁴ Lee claims that the "divine dispositional essence" shapes Edwards's doctrine, which utilises the Augustinian and Social models, especially the latter.²⁵ Therefore, except for Strobel, who ascertains the "personal beatific-delight" of Edwards's Trinity, the theological scholarship fails to appreciate the centrality of happiness.

Two historians observe Edwards's concern to understand happiness as related to Edwards's early writings on the Trinity, which appreciation appears to be due to a careful analysis of the internal context of Misc. 94, as with Marsden:

The doctrine of the Trinity...was a subject of extraordinary interest to Edwards. In his "Miscellanies" notebooks, he constantly returned to this theme. The very end for which this supremely social being created the universe was, as he wrote in an early entry, "*the communication of happiness*" to his creatures.²⁶

Thus, Marsden observes that Edwards's early doctrine of the Trinity is particularly related to his teleology, "the communication of happiness." Schafer is even more explicit, writing that Edwards's "thesis that God's goodness...was the motive of creation and the creature's happiness its end," and "identifying that happiness as delight in the excellency of God (Misc. 87, 92)," led to "Edwards's derivation of the Trinity from God's contemplation of and delight in his own

hallmark of the Puritan and Reformed tradition Edwards's inherits, as Muller affirms: "Thus the orthodox not only state the doctrine of the Trinity as the ground of all other Christian doctrine – they also state it as an eminently practical doctrine..." Muller, *PRRD4*, 154. For the practical nature of Thomas Goodwin's Trinitarianism, see Beeke and Jones, *Puritan Theology*, 86. For John Owen's practical Trinitarianism, see Paul C. H. Lim, *Mystery Unveiled: The Crisis of the Trinity in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 173, 186-87, 215; Kelly Kapic, "Communion with God by John Owen (1610-1683), *The Devoted Life*, 167, 168. Simon Burton likewise emphasises "the practical orientation" of Baxter's Trinitarian theology. Simon J. G. Burton, *The Hallowing of Logic: The Trinitarian Theology of Richard Baxter's Methodus Theologiae* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 210.

²⁴ See Amy Plantinga Pauw, "The Trinity," in *The Princeton Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Sang Hyun Lee (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

²⁵ See Sang Hyun Lee, "God's Relation to the World," in *The Princeton Companion to Jonathan Edwards*; Sang Hyun Lee, "Editor's Introduction," *WJE* 21.

²⁶ Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 77 (emphasis added).

excellency (Nos. 94, 96, 98).”²⁷ Schafer’s comments imply, therefore, that Edwards’s doctrine of the Trinity in Misc. 94 is shaped by his writings in Misc. 87 and 92 on happiness as “the end of the creation.”

Indeed, Edwards’s writings on the Trinity emerge when they do for the sake of his teleological project, and they appear to be shaped by that project. Thus, my reading suggests that the purpose of Edwards’s doctrine of the Trinity is primarily organic and in a sense, practical, rather than reactionary or polemical. The polemical context is of course a factor, but this is inherent to the Early Modern Puritan and Reformed doctrine of the Trinity, which almost always manifests an overlap of the practical and polemical concern.²⁸ As Pauw writes, “The Trinity was for Edwards a “useful” doctrine.”²⁹ Edwards’s unpublished writings on the Trinity are not standalone doctrinal works, but, common to his tradition, they are intended for a particular use - to serve his grand teleological vision for spiritual happiness as ultimate *telos*. Strobel is, therefore, near the mark when he writes, “Edwards’s account of the Trinity is the anchor, or in other words, the fountain of all that is. Edwards’s theology traces the contours of the Trinity so that the ordering, emphasis *and teleology of his thought* finds its home in his trinitarian analysis.”³⁰ Indeed, Edwards’s happy Trinity is the “home” of his teleology - of happiness. In fact, it would appear that Edward’s doctrine of the Trinity is shaped by that teleology, which is, as we have discussed, theologically

²⁷ Schafer, “Editor’s Introduction,” *WJE* 13, 14.

²⁸ “In other words, *Puritan spirituality was as polemical as it was practical*...It was not enough to merely write *against* Biddle and the antitrinitarians; Cheynell and Owen also had to write to foster a more robust, experimental divinity that was *at once Trinitarian and practical*.” Lim, *Mystery Unveiled*, 173 (emphasis added).

²⁹ Amy Plantinga Pauw, *The Supreme Harmony of All: The Trinitarian Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2002), 15. Pauw’s interpretation of Edwards’s “useful,” “practical Trinitarianism” is keen in highlighting the Augustinian aspect of Edwards’s doctrine as lending itself to explaining the economic Trinity, especially the gift of the love of the Holy Spirit: “Though the psychological image was a model of the immanent Trinity, it had strong implications for God’s redemptive presence in the world, in Edwards’s phrase, “God is a communicative being”...the communication of God’s grace is connected with “the Holy Spirit’s being in them, in the love of God’s being in them.”” Ibid, 12-13.

³⁰ Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards’s Theology*, 4.

grounded by the communicative goodness of God.³¹ This is not to say that Edwards's doctrine of the Trinity is controlled by his teleology of happiness, but it is shaped by it. Indeed, the Augustinian structure of Misc. 94, "Trinity," starts with happiness:

'Tis often said that *God is infinitely happy from all eternity* in the view and enjoyment of himself, in the reflection and converse love of his own essence, that is, in the perfect idea he has of himself, infinitely perfect.³²

I am suggesting that this happy starting point is due to the purpose of Misc. 94 to serve Edwards's teleological vision of God's goodness communicated for the happiness of the creature.³³ Edwards begins his doctrine of the Trinity during the winter of 1723-24 in Misc. 94 just as he will, six years later in the *Discourse*, stating that God is happy – infinitely and eternally happy in the enjoyment of himself.³⁴ Strobel is, again, keen to identify the centrality of happiness in

³¹ Grounding a doctrine of the Trinity in the communicative goodness of God has medieval precedent, as with Alexander of Hales, whose "whole" theology, writes Muller, "flows out of the assumption that the good is self-diffusive, *bonum est diffusivum sui*." The diffusive, communicable goodness of God, writes Muller, "can be understood either essentially or personally: the former is the "communication of divine goodness to creatures," the latter the act by which one person diffuses himself in the procession of another." Put another way, "the goodness of God is communicable in two ways, by the generation of a person and by the working of divine love – either by nature or by will." Muller, *PRRD4*, 38, 39. Muller traces this line of thinking to Bonaventure and Aquinas, where "the logic of the Trinity as an expression of divine love" centers on the communicative goodness of God. Ibid, 45-46. Similarly, the communicative goodness of God motivates and shapes Edwards's doctrine of the Trinity for the sake of his teleological vision with the communication of goodness, i.e. happiness, as ultimate *telos*. Misc. 96, "Trinity," explicitly demonstrates the Trinitarian nature of God's *ad intra* goodness, which is nearly identical to Aquinas. For Aquinas's model, see Muller, *PRRD4*, 46. Studebaker emphasizes this aspect of Edwards's doctrine, but for the sake of arguing that Edwards stands in the Augustinian mutual love tradition. Studebaker and Caldwell, *Trinitarian Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 120, 152.

³² Edwards, Misc. 94, "Trinity," *WJE* 13, 256 (emphasis added).

³³ Similarly, Burton argues that Richard Baxter's Trinitarian doctrine is "profoundly" shaped by the divine "principles of operation *ad extra*," God's Power, Wisdom, and Love, which provide "a bridge between God's internal and external actions, or in contemporary theological parlance between the immanent and economic Trinity." Burton, *Hallowing of Logic*, 205.

³⁴ Again, the fact that the *Discourse* retains this precise happiness framework is significant, indicating its enduring nature, rendering the interpretation of Misc. 94 (and its teleological context) of great value to the interpretation of the *Discourse*.

Edwards's Trinity, yet Strobel claims that Edwards's "personal beatific-delight" model functions as a mechanism to explain Trinitarian 'personhood' and the *ad intra* processions for the sake of Edwards's polemic against anti-trinitarians. By failing to grapple with Misc. 94 and its teleological context, Strobel fails to appreciate the full significance of the *beatitudo Dei* for Edwards's Trinity.³⁵ Similarly, Studebaker observes Edwards's "theology of God's disposition to communicate happiness," yet his subsequent discussion of Edwards's Trinity overlooks the significance of happiness.³⁶

3.3.2 *The Happiness of God: Historical Background*

The opening doctrinal statement of Misc. 94 mentioned above is known in Reformed orthodoxy as God's "formal" *ad intra* happiness, in which God has his own goodness as the object of his contemplation."³⁷ The *beatitudo Dei* surfaces in theological systems most often within the context of the life of God (*vita Dei*) and especially, the sufficiency of God.³⁸ It is not an isolated doctrine, as it is often utilised to demonstrate that God is the source of human happiness.³⁹ The doctrine of divine blessedness "figured fairly prominently" during the medieval period, and experiences a mild resurgence during the period of Reformed orthodoxy.⁴⁰

According to Muller, "the attributes of blessedness or felicity held a central position" in the doctrine of God of medieval doctors like Scotus and Aquinas.⁴¹ The doctrine is most often explained within the context of the essence and attributes of God, as with Aquinas, who writes, "Of God alone is it

³⁵ Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology*, 36-40.

³⁶ Studebaker and Caldwell, *Trinitarian Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 62.

³⁷ Muller, *PRRD3*, 382. This doctrine is nearly identical to the "formal" *ad intra* glory of God, defined as God's knowledge and love of, and delight in himself. Muller, *PRRD3*, 547.

³⁸ *Ibid*, 373.

³⁹ *Ibid*, 382.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 371.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, 372.

true that His Being is His Happiness.”⁴² Aquinas describes the “formal” *ad intra* happiness as “the pure and perfect actuality of the divine being,” the “contemplative happiness,” or “joy,” of God, for God “possesses a continual and most certain contemplation of Himself and of all else...He possesses joy in himself and all things else for his delight.”⁴³ Similarly, Scotus writes in his *De Primo Principio*, “You (Lord) are happy, indeed you are by nature happiness, because you are comprehending yourself. You are the clear vision of yourself and the most joyful love...”⁴⁴

According to Muller, Reformed orthodox definitions of the *beatitudo Dei* appear to “follow as a consequence of the goodness and sufficiency of God”:

...who alone of all beings finds contentment in himself and *whose blessedness is, therefore, the final goal of all creaturely existence: God is both blessed in se and the source (fons) of all blessedness.*⁴⁵

Therefore, the significance of the *ad intra beatitudo Dei* in Reformed systems is the demonstration of God’s life as self-sufficient, and God’s happiness as both independent *and* the source of human happiness, the “final goal” of creaturely existence, which is precisely what I am suggesting Edwards has in mind with Misc. 94.

Presenting divine blessedness as evidence of God’s self-sufficiency often relies on Aristotle’s definition of sufficiency and its necessary happiness, as with Musculus:

First we call Sufficiency, that which excludes all lack, which is so furnished with all abundance of all things necessary, that nothing more can be desired. This the Philosopher terms Sufficiency in itself, and attributes thereunto happiness, and the most high and perfect goodness.⁴⁶

Likewise, Gill writes:

⁴² Aquinas, quoted by Alcorn, *Happiness*, 90.

⁴³ Muller, *PRRD3*, 60-61.

⁴⁴ Scotus, quoted by Bac, *Perfect Will Theology* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), front page.

⁴⁵ Muller, *PRRD3*, 382 (emphasis added).

⁴⁶ Musculus, quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 369.

The blessedness of God...may be strongly concluded from the last treated of; for if God is a sufficient, and self-sufficient, and an all-sufficient Being, he must be happy.⁴⁷

Similarly, Leigh writes that God's "all-sufficiency is that whereby God is of himself all-sufficient for himself to make himself most blessed."⁴⁸ The self-sufficient happiness of God also explains divine goodness and creaturely happiness, whereby God is able to provide all things,⁴⁹ as with Calvin, who understands this attribute as God's "sufficiency to make us in every way happy."⁵⁰

This doctrine of the happiness of God's self-sufficiency also means that God is not dependent on the creation for his happiness:

Inasmuch as God is the ultimate source and goal of all good and as both necessary and sufficient in his being, God is in no need of his creatures or of particular acts on the part of his creatures to ensure his happiness. God is therefore, utterly free in his dealings with the creation...⁵¹

Thus, the *ad intra* happiness of God guarantees the immutability, independence, and aseity of God, particularly in light of his communications to the creature, which, again, is precisely what I am suggesting Edwards seeks to establish in Misc. 94, confirming and protecting the infinite and eternal *ad intra* happiness of the Triune God. Bates, whom Muller cites, defends God's communications of goodness and happiness on the basis of the infinite happiness of God:

Infinite goodness shined forth in the creation. This is the leading attribute, that called forth the rest of the work. As there was no matter, so no motive to induce God to make the world, but what arose from his goodness: *for he is an all-sufficient being, perfectly blessed in himself...neither was he less happy, or content in the eternal duration before the existence of any creature, than he is since. His original felicity is equally incapable of accession, as of diminution.* It is evident therefore, that only free and unexcited goodness moved him to create all things,

⁴⁷ Gill, *Complete Body*, 179.

⁴⁸ Leigh, Quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 380.

⁴⁹ Muller, *PRRD3*, 369.

⁵⁰ Calvin, quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 371.

⁵¹ Muller, *PRRD3*, 383.

*that he might impart being and happiness to the creature, not enrich his own.*⁵²

This is the first purpose of Edwards's doctrine of the happy Trinity in Misc. 94, to establish the fact that, as Bates puts it, God is "an all-sufficient being, perfectly blessed in himself," which defends the orthodoxy of Edwards's doctrine of God in light of Edwards's "dangerous" teleological entry, Misc. 92. Indeed, immediately after writing Misc. 94 on the happiness of the Trinity, Edwards reveals this precise purpose in his sermon, *Nothing Upon Earth Can Represent the Glories of Heaven*:

How good is God, that he has created man for this very end, to make him happy in the enjoyment of himself, the Almighty, who was happy from the days of eternity in himself, in the beholding of his own infinite beauty: the Father in the beholding and love of his Son, his perfect and most excellent image, the brightness of his own glory; and the Son in the love and enjoyment of the Father. And God needed no more....'Twas not that he might be made more happy himself, but that [he] might make something else happy; that he might make them blessed in the beholding of his excellency, and might this way glorify himself.⁵³

This statement, virtually a Trinitarian version of the Bates text, is evidence that Edwards's draws upon the Reformed *beatitudo Dei* to articulate his doctrine of the Trinity in Misc. 94 for the sake of establishing the infinite and eternal happiness of the Trinity, thus protecting God from mutability and dependence in light of God's telic purposes to happily make the creature happy.

The happiness of God also provides a basis for the happiness of the creature for the Reformed. As Velde observes, the *beatitudo Dei* almost always implies the corollary that divine happiness is "overflowing toward God's creatures."⁵⁴ Indeed, I am suggesting that this is the second primary goal of Edwards's doctrine of the happiness of the Trinity in Misc. 94 - to explain God as the source of creaturely happiness. Edwards has established God's goodness as the source of happiness in his earlier writings that prove his teleology in

⁵² Bates, *Harmony of the Divine Attributes*, 6-7.

⁵³ Edwards, *Nothing on Earth can Represent the Glories of Heaven*, WJE 14, 153.

⁵⁴ te Velde, *Paths Beyond Tracing Out*, 242.

general theological terms, but then, desiring to defend this teleology from a thoroughly Reformed, biblical, and Trinitarian perspective, Edwards establishes the source of happiness in terms of the Trinity in Misc. 94.

Therefore, as he begins to pen Misc. 94 on the happiness of the Trinity, Edwards has two goals in mind: First, the protection of an orthodox doctrine of God, specifically God's aseity with respect to the relational happiness of God's communicative goodness described in Misc. 92. Second, by establishing the infinite and eternal happiness of the *ad intra* Trinity, Edwards lays the foundation necessary to explain God as the source of happiness in Trinitarian terms for the sake of a Reformed articulation of his teleological scheme.

3.3.3 *Miscellanies No. 94: (The Happiness of the) "Trinity"*

The opening doctrinal statement about God's happiness in Misc. 94 is implicitly Trinitarian, in the Augustinian tradition common to Edwards's theological heritage, reflecting "formal" *ad intra* glory, or happiness,⁵⁵ of God, "his own knowledge, love, and delight in himself."⁵⁶ The influence of Mastricht is likely, as according to te Velde, Mastricht applies "Trinitarian color" to the doctrine, "God is fully delighted and content with himself...by pointing to the mutual self-glorification of the three Persons in God."⁵⁷ This generally Augustinian model allows Edwards to explain, not the reasonableness of the Trinity for the sake of polemics, but the happiness of the Trinity for the sake of his teleology:

*'Tis oft said that God is infinitely happy from all eternity in the view and enjoyment of himself, in the reflection and converse love of his own essence, that is, in the perfect idea he has of himself, infinitely perfect.*⁵⁸

⁵⁵ God's "formal" *ad intra* happiness is nearly identical to the "formal" *ad intra* glory in Reformed orthodoxy. Muller, *PRRD3*, 382.

⁵⁶ Leigh, quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 547. Muller states that this doctrine is indeed utilized by the Reformed as a "ground" for Augustinian models of the Trinity. Muller, *PRRD3*, 548.

⁵⁷ te Velde, *Paths Beyond Tracing Out*, 204-205.

⁵⁸ Edwards, Misc. 94, *WJE 13*, 256 (emphasis added).

This statement about the *ad intra* happiness of God represents the foundation of Edwards's discussion the Trinity, whereby the Son is identified as the idea, or knowledge, of God and the Holy Spirit, as the love and delight of God. This Augustinian mental, or psychological, analogy defines the structure of Edwards's doctrine.⁵⁹ While many of Edwards's Reformed peers and predecessors are averse to this model due to its 'speculative' nature, the doctrine is nevertheless, adhered to by many. I would suggest that Edwards chooses to employ this Augustinian model due to the fact that it particularly lends itself to establishing the *ad intra* happiness of God, which serves to protect God's aseity and explain his teleology in terms of the economic Trinity, especially the communication of the Holy Spirit, who is the source of all happiness, as Edwards writes, "the infinite delight God has in himself...that is the fountain of all delight."⁶⁰

3.3.3.1 Reformed Background on the Trinity⁶¹

⁵⁹ Studebaker defends Edwards's "basically traditional model of the Trinity, the mutual love model of the Augustinian tradition." Studebaker and Caldwell, *Trinitarian Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 61. Crisp, admits Edwards's ("problematic") Augustinian model. Crisp, *Jonathan Edwards on God and Creation*, 118. However, Crisp's more recent *Jonathan Edwards among the Theologians* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2015) claims that it is "difficult to fit Edwards's doctrine into either the "Augustinian" or the "social" model preferred by some earlier studies of Edwardsian Trinitarianism." Crisp, *Edwards among the Theologians*, 58. Pauw, Lee, McClymond, McDermott, and Danaher are representative of the "earlier studies" that read Edwards's Trinity as "social," or as some combination of the Augustinian and Victorine (social) models. See Amy Plantinga Pauw, *The Supreme Harmony of All*; Lee, "Editor's Introduction," *WJE* 21; William J. Danaher, Jr., *The Trinitarian Ethics of Jonathan Edwards* (London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004); McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*; Michael J. McClymond, "Hearing the Symphony: A Critique of Some Critics of Sang Lee's and Amy Pauw's Accounts of Jonathan Edwards' View of God," in *Jonathan Edwards as Contemporary*. Strobel rejects the social analogy, emphasising the centrality of the psychological analogy, yet rejects the "Augustinian" nomenclature, recommending his own Trinitarian "personal beatific-delight" model. Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology*, 65-70.

⁶⁰ Edwards, Misc. 94, *WJE* 13, 261.

⁶¹ The scholarship dedicated to the doctrine of the Trinity in Reformed orthodoxy and Puritan studies is limited, represented by just a handful of scholarly works. The fourth volume of Muller's *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, *The Triunity of God* (PRRD4) is indispensable, but many crucial Reformed texts remain unpublished and

Edwards would have been very familiar with the Augustinian mental analogy as a result of his Reformed heritage. As Muller has shown, Reformed Trinitarian doctrine, while manifesting doctrinal development and a diversity of expression, displays a strong continuity with the patristic and medieval tradition.⁶² Rooted in such historic statements as the Athanasian and Nicene creeds, the later Trinitarian expressions of Augustine and Aquinas, as well as the Fourth Lateran Council and the Council of Florence, the Trinitarian doctrine of the Reformed orthodox, like that of the Reformers, maintains the essential aspects of this Western Augustinian tradition.⁶³ Reformed theologians uphold the basic Western Latin teaching, seeking to elaborate and explain the “existence of God as one in essence and three in person,”⁶⁴ in light of the Scriptures and an evolving philosophical, theological, and polemical environment. Theodore Beza is, according to Heppe, representative of the Reformed consensus:

Trinity is that relation in God, whereby in His divine and single essence three persons subsist, truly and actually distinguishable from each other by their own attributes or by a distinct mode of existence, namely Father, Son, and H. Spirit, which single persons are the same true God.⁶⁵

lack critical analysis. Adriaan Neele writes in his 2009 monograph on Maastricht and Reformed orthodoxy that of his 1000+ publication bibliography, *not one* is devoted to the doctrine of the Trinity. Adriaan C. Neele, *Petrus van Maastricht (1630-1706): Reformed Orthodoxy: Method and Piety* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 245, n. 1. Muller writes about the dearth of scholarship on the “trinitarian theology of the seventeenth century writers...the heresies have received significant analysis in monograph and scholarly essays, but the orthodoxy, with few exceptions, has been neglected.” Muller, *PRRD4*, 24.

⁶² Muller, *PRRD4*, 400. “In short, the Reformed orthodox doctrine of the Trinity” represents a “complex development of doctrine intended to recover, respect, and use the patristic definitions and arguments insofar as they could be argued anew exegetically, under the authority of the biblical norm. The resultant doctrine stands on trajectories of biblical exegesis and Trinitarian formulation that extend from the Middle Ages through the Reformation into the era of Protestant orthodoxy.” Muller, *PRRD4*, 22. Lim asserts that Owen and Cheynell develop their doctrines of the Trinity, “steeped in patristic theology and medieval and Protestant Scholasticism.” Lim, *Mystery Unveiled*, 173.

⁶³ Muller, *PRRD4*, 83-84, 414-15.

⁶⁴ “Trinitas.” Muller, *Dictionary*, 306.

⁶⁵ Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 110.

The doctrine of the Trinity in Reformed orthodoxy exhibits a “profound interrelationship” with the discussion of the essence and attributes of God, a unity that is, according to Muller, consistently on display.⁶⁶ Leiden theologians Polanus, Junius, and Trelcatius, each demonstrate, writes Muller, that the Trinity is “not separate from the discussion of divine essence, but is rather one of the ways in which the essence (or nature) of God is to be understood.”⁶⁷ Another aspect of doctrinal symmetry is the correlation between the *ad intra* distinctions and *ad extra* operations of the persons of the Trinity. According to Muller, “the revelation *ad extra* corresponds with the reality *ad intra*.”⁶⁸ Neele has shown that Mastricht, Burman, and Indereck define the distinctions of persons on the basis of the *ad extra* economic activity, rather than *ad intra* origin and emanations. Mastricht, like Augustine, believes that the *ad extra* work of the Trinity reveals the *ad intra* relations: “The economic Trinity reveals, for Mastricht, the ontological Trinity.”⁶⁹

While medieval theology is a strong influence, the Scriptures are most essential to the Reformed doctrine of the Trinity, and therefore, Reformed orthodoxy exhibits a wariness of natural reason.⁷⁰ Thus, the Trinity, the

⁶⁶ Muller, *PRRD4*, 199, 418. Van den Brink counters Muller, arguing that Reformed theologians can be observed “disconnecting the treatment of God as Trinity from the treatment of God’s one essence.” Gijsbert van den Brink, “Reformed Scholasticism and the Trinitarian Renaissance,” in *Scholasticism Reformed: Essays in Honour of Willem J. van Asselt*, ed. Maarten Wisse, Marcel Sarot, and Willemien Otten (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010), 339.

⁶⁷ Richard A. Muller, “Unity and Distinction: The Nature of God in the Theology of Lucas Trelcatius, Jr,” *Reformation & Renaissance Review* 10 (2008): 330.

⁶⁸ Muller, *PRRD4*, 259.

⁶⁹ Adriaan C. Neele, *The Art of Living to God: A Study of Method and Piety in the Theoretico-practica theologia of Petrus van Mastricht (1630-1706)* (South Africa: University of Pretoria, 2002), 224.

⁷⁰ Both Heppe and Muller adhere to a historiography of Reason vs. Revelation with regard to the doctrine of the Trinity, assuming it develops through *opposing* forces of reason and revelation, however, Christine Helmer sees reason and metaphysics *serving* the doctrine of the Trinity during the Early Modern period, in order to explain, if not fully comprehend, the Trinity. See Christine Helmer, “Between history and speculation: Christian Trinitarian thinking after the Reformation,” in *The Cambridge*

quintessential mystery of the Christian religion, can be comprehended neither by reason, nor natural theology.⁷¹ Nevertheless, Reformed theologians discuss and illustrate the doctrine in various ways. Although the Reformed generally shun proofs and claims of exhaustive knowledge of the immanent Trinity,⁷² many utilize the Augustinian mental analogy derived from his *De Trinitate*, which understands the Son as God's knowledge of himself and the Holy Spirit as God's love for himself.⁷³ While several Reformed theologians employ the Augustinian model, Muller follows Heppe in characterising this group as the minority, "speculative," stream of orthodoxy.⁷⁴ Nevertheless, the Augustinian model is not a source of controversy,⁷⁵ as these theologians frequently differ from one other, if not in core dogma, in various ways of explanation.⁷⁶

Companion to the Trinity, ed. Peter C. Phan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

⁷¹ "The common view of the Reformed is that the Trinity can neither be investigated nor solidly proved by natural reason." Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 109. Put positively, the Trinity is "shrouded in mystery, resting simply on revelation." Ibid, 110. For example, Muller describes Voetius's attitude toward the Augustinian model as "'docte ignoratur,' a matter of beyond knowing, or 'quaestio curiosa,' an excessively inquisitive question." Muller, *PRRD4*, 162.

⁷² Muller, *PRRD4*, 150, 410.

⁷³ In books 8-15 of Augustine's influential *De Trinitate*, the analogy for the Trinity is presented first, as a mind, knowing and loving itself: "And so there is a certain image of the Trinity: the mind itself, its knowledge, which is its offspring, and love as a third; these three are one and one substance," and second, as the remembering, understanding, and loving self. Mary T. Clark, "De Trinitate," in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, eds. Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 98.

⁷⁴ Muller, *PRRD4*, 25, 410, 418; Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 106. Trueman characterises Baxter's doctrine of the Trinity as speculative "rationalism." Carl R. Trueman, "A Small Step Towards Rationalism: The Impact of the Metaphysics of Tommaso Campanella on the Theology of Richard Baxter," in *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment*, eds. Carl R. Trueman and R. Scott Clark (Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2005).

⁷⁵ Muller, *PRRD4*, 418; Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 105. For example, Andreas Beck writes that Voetius, "treated with some reserve, however, Melancthon's "psychological" positioning of the innertrinitarian processions...Voetius worried too much about the danger of speculation at that point, although he definitely felt this distribution of the processions to be quite obvious. In contrast to Flacius he did not disqualify this point of view as being the *somnium Philippi*." Andreas J. Beck, "Melancthonian Thoughts In Gisbertus Voetius' Scholastic Doctrine of God," in *Scholasticism Reformed*, 125.

⁷⁶ Muller, *PRRD4*, 391, 400.

Therefore, while the majority of the Reformed refrain from an “excessive” use of reason for the sake of maintaining the mystery of the immanent Trinity,⁷⁷ there are a significant number who are willing to appropriate the Augustinian metaphor, especially its “medieval variant,” Aquinas’s model of intellect and will.⁷⁸ Keckermann’s mental analogy, influenced by Melanchthon, whom Beck and Heppe demonstrate as adopting the Augustinian model, is quite influential throughout the seventeenth century in this regard.⁷⁹ Theologians such as Ames, Baxter, Burman, Ainsworth, Viret, Stackhouse, Poiret, Owen, and John Edwards employ various expressions of the Augustinian analogy.⁸⁰ Also, Leydecker supports the idea that “the two Trinitarian processions are necessary and infinite acts of divine knowledge and will,” according Bac,⁸¹ and according to Schafer, New England Puritan Cotton Mather’s *Blessed Unions* employs the “fundamental human analogy: the self, its knowledge, and its love” that is “remarkably similar to JE’s argument.”⁸² Neele’s research reveals that Maastricht also employs, albeit “in a limited way,” the Augustinian mental analogy of the Son as the idea of God and the Spirit as love.⁸³

3.3.3.2 Edwards’s Happy Mental Analogy

This section will highlight the way in which Edwards’s Misc. 94 employs the Augustinian mental analogy inherited from his own tradition to demonstrate the happiness of the Trinity, in order to establish both the independence and self-sufficiency of God and his infinite happiness, *and* the happiness of the

⁷⁷ Ibid, 410.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 138. Aquinas’s analogy illustrates the *ad intra* processions of the Son as an intellectual begetting of the Word, the concept or understanding of the Father, and the Holy Spirit as the love or will of the Father and Son. Brian Davies, *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 193-97, 202-3.

⁷⁹ Beck, “Melanchthonian Thoughts,” 125. Heppe describes Melanchthon’s doctrine as Augustinian and influential on Keckermann. Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 106-108.

⁸⁰ Muller, *PRRD4*, 24, 64-65, 67, 72, 73, 93, 143, 151, 157-67, 302, 333, 398; Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 105-7.

⁸¹ Bac, *Perfect Will Theology*, 69-70.

⁸² Schafer, *WJE* 13, 256, n. 1.

⁸³ Neele, *The Art of Living to God*, 223.

Trinity as the fountain and source of creaturely happiness, for the sake of his teleology of happiness. Edwards utilises the mental analogy, but he particularly enhances it by establishing the happiness of the divine mind. In fact, Edwards's "development of the *beatitudo Dei*" is one of the reasons Strobel rejects the Augustinian category.⁸⁴ Indeed, Edwards's doctrine is certainly not a restatement of Augustine's doctrine, largely due to the fact that happiness is central to the model. Augustine conceives of the Triune God as mind, knowing and loving itself, whereas Edwards intends to establish the *happiness* of God's mind, his knowledge and love, *and "delight."* Augustine writes, "And so there is a certain image of the Trinity: the mind itself, its knowledge, which is its offspring, and love as a third; these three are one and one substance."⁸⁵ Edwards, however, bases his doctrine, not on the mind, merely knowing and loving, but the happiness of God's mind, knowing, loving, *and delighting* in himself.

William Ames's articulation is representative of the standard Augustinian model:

The Father is, as it were, *Deus intelligens*, God understanding; the Son who is the express image of the Father is *Deus intellectus*, God understood; and the Holy Spirit, flowing and breathed from the Father through the Son, is *Deus dilectus*, God loved.⁸⁶

Ames's portrayal of the mental analogy consists of understanding and love, but not delight and happiness. Edwards, however, reinterprets the standard Augustinian mental analogy in terms of delight and happiness, for the sake of demonstrating the happiness of the Trinity. Studebaker takes note of Edwards's peculiar unwillingness to follow the (in his opinion, more coherent) second Augustinian framework of "memory, understanding, and will":

Edwards adopts the mental image of mind, understanding, and will/love to portray the Trinity, but unlike Augustine does not move to the more appropriate image of the concomitant operations of the mind's memory,

⁸⁴ Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology*, 68.

⁸⁵ Clark, "De Trinitate," 98.

⁸⁶ Ames, *Marrow*, 89.

understanding, and will, which illustrate three activities within an undivided nature.⁸⁷

Indeed, Edwards is perhaps willing to utilise the more difficult model (which Strobel has demonstrated is ultimately reconciled in the *Discourse* through a conception of the Father's personhood as derivative via *perichoresis*⁸⁸), in order to establish the *happiness* of God, which would be muddled by the attribution of "memory" to the Father. Thus, Edwards utilises the first Augustinian model (mind, knowledge, love) due to the fact that it facilitates a doctrine of God's Triune *happiness*. Isaac Watts, whose sermon, *The scale of blessedness; or, Blessed saints, blessed Savior, and blessed Trinity*, Edwards includes in his reading catalogue during this time,⁸⁹ writes therein of the happiness of the Triune persons: "Nor is their *Blessedness* or their Nearness a dull and unactive state: Knowledge and Mutual Love make up their heaven."⁹⁰ Similar to Edwards, the knowledge of the Son and the love (and delight) of Spirit represent the blessedness, or happiness of God:

'Tis often said that God is infinitely happy from all eternity in the view and enjoyment of himself, in the reflection and converse love of his own essence, that is, in the perfect idea he has of himself, infinitely perfect.⁹¹

3.3.3.3 Triune Happiness: A Reasonable Claim

Edwards's opening reference to the Trinitarian controversies in Misc. 94 is commonly taken as evidence that Edwards's purpose is polemical. However, it is included by Edwards simply to provide a context for the defense of his use of reason, particularly the reasonable claim that *the happiness of God* makes sense of the Trinity.

There has been much cry of late against saying one word, particularly about the Trinity, but what the Scripture has said; judging it impossible but that if we did, we should err in a thing so much above us. But if they call that which necessarily results from the putting [together] of reason

⁸⁷ Studebaker and Caldwell, *Trinitarian Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 109-110.

⁸⁸ Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology*, 38-41.

⁸⁹ Edwards, *WJE* 26, 120.

⁹⁰ Watts, *The Scale of Blessedness*, 393 (emphasis added).

⁹¹ Edwards, Misc. 94, *WJE* 13, 256 (emphasis added).

and Scripture, though it has not been said in Scripture in express words – I say, if they call this what is not said in the Scripture, I am not afraid to say twenty things about the Trinity which the Scripture never said. There may be deductions of reason from what has been said, and safe and certain deductions too, as well as about the most obvious and easy matters.⁹²

McDermott claims that Misc. 94 represents a polemical response to either British antitrinitarian authors, or the apologetic shortcomings of Clarke, Sherlock, and Watts.⁹³ However, all that the text reveals is a defense of Edwards's use of reason against radical biblicism.⁹⁴

I think that it is within the reach of naked reason to perceive certainly that there are three distinct in God, each of which is the same [God], three that must be distinct, really and truly distinct, but three, either distinct persons or properties or anything else; and that of these three, one is (more properly than anything else) begotten of the other, and that the third proceeds alike from both, and that the first is neither begotten nor proceeds.⁹⁵

Indeed, the *happiness* of God is that which Edwards reaches via reason to enable him to “perceive” the doctrine of the Trinity. Edwards's point is that it is perfectly reasonable that the happiness of God explains the Trinity, as the statement that immediately follows indicates: “Tis often said that God is infinitely happy from all eternity in the view and enjoyment of himself...”⁹⁶ It is not excellency, nor mutual love, nor personhood, nor divine dispositions, but the divine *happiness* that explains Edwards's Trinity, the infinite and eternal happiness of God. Edwards refuses to comprehend the eternal *ad intra* life of God any other way, as he writes later in the entry, “what other act can be

⁹² Edwards, Misc. 94, *WJE* 13, 257.

⁹³ “Edwards apparently regarded these new developments with impatience. He saw no reason to be so timid about *defending a doctrine* that for him was absolutely central to Christian faith...A determination to take those things seriously could empower reason to discover truths like the Trinity that would stand deism on its head.” McDermott, *Edwards Confronts the Gods*, 7, 40.

⁹⁴ Schafer is keen to perceive that Edwards “is not directly concerned with” the antitrinitarian controversies. Schafer, *WJE* 13, 256, n. 2.

⁹⁵ Edwards, Misc. 94, *WJE* 13, 257.

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 257.

thought of in God from eternity, but delighting in himself?”⁹⁷ The Trinitarian happiness of God is, according to Edwards, eminently reasonable.

The happiness of God’s knowledge, love and delight is, therefore, a doctrine Edwards inherits from his own tradition that enables him to define the Triune life of God in terms of happiness, for the sake of his teleology of happiness. Studebaker admits the import of the divine happiness for Edwards’s Trinity, yet he claims that Edwards’s “attempts to argue that God is triune” from the divine goodness and happiness are “innovations” that represent “an attempt to strengthen, support, and update a doctrine of the Trinity that is identifiably in the mutual love tradition.”⁹⁸ Strobel correctly observes the centrality of happiness in Edwards’s model, yet, similar to Studebaker, he overemphasises the polemical context and fails to recognize the context of Misc. 94 and Edwards’s teleology of happiness.⁹⁹ I am suggesting that the happiness of God explains Edwards’s Trinity, and for the sake of his Reformed teleology of happiness, the Trinity explains the happiness of God.¹⁰⁰ In fact, throughout Misc. 94, Edwards can be observed particularly applying divine happiness to the Augustinian mental analogy, for the sake of demonstrating the Triune happiness as both infinite and perfect, and the source of all happiness.

3.3.3.4 *The Infinite Happiness of the Son and the Father*

Edwards’s discussion of the second person of the Trinity demonstrates a unique emphasis on the infinite happiness of God. The Trinitarian happiness is explained first by the intellection of the second person of the Trinity, the Son,

⁹⁷ Ibid, 261.

⁹⁸ Studebaker and Caldwell, *Trinitarian Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 152.

⁹⁹ Strobel argues that Edwards is “offering important middle ground between himself and his anti-trinitarian opponents” by the “personal-beatific delight” Trinitarian model, for the sake of explaining the “personhood” of God. Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards’s Theology*, 37-8.

¹⁰⁰ As Edwards writes in his later (1738) sermon, *God is a Being Possessed of the Most Absolute Perfect Happiness*: “The happiness of God is but one and comes but one way...the communion of the persons of the blessed Trinity.” *Works of Jonathan Edwards Online*, Sermon # 494.

who is the “express and perfect image of God,” the “infinitely perfect” and eternal knowledge, or “idea,” God has of himself: “by God’s reflecting on himself the Deity is begotten, there is a substantial image of God begotten.”¹⁰¹ Ames’s doctrine is the same: “the Son who is the express image of the Father is *Deus intellectus*, God understood...the Son is produced, so to speak, by a mental act...”¹⁰² Keckermann is similar:

God has known himself most perfectly from eternity, that He has conceived and begotten in His very self the most perfect image of Himself....And this conception, which is the most perfect of the divine knowledge, will be a generation, positing a mode of existence in God or a second person, which is rightly called both the image of God and the Son.”¹⁰³

Notwithstanding this continuity with Ames and Keckermann, Edwards’s doctrine of the Son is uniquely and particularly aimed at emphasizing the infinite *happiness* of God.

The first thing that Edwards says about God’s “idea” is that it is “infinitely perfect.” As Schweitzer has shown, Edwards frequently integrates “divine infinity” in order to “secure divine aseity” and “show how God as infinite can seek something in creation and redemption,”¹⁰⁴ which precisely characterises the problem of Misc. 92, which states that God “takes complacency” in seeking the creature’s happiness in creating the world. According to Schweitzer, “the unlimited nature of the infinite means that it is not only qualitatively different from the finite but also includes it.”¹⁰⁵ In fact, Schweitzer observes that Edwards applies the divine infinity to the Trinity in order to show that, “God is immutable in the sense of being fully actual in the immanent Trinity.”¹⁰⁶ More than a reasonable doctrine of the Trinity, Edwards aims at establishing the immutability

¹⁰¹ Edwards, Misc. 94, *WJE* 13, 258.

¹⁰² Ames, *Marrow*, 89.

¹⁰³ Keckermann, quoted by Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 106-7.

¹⁰⁴ Don Schweitzer, “Jonathan Edwards’ Understanding of Divine Infinity,” *Jonathan Edwards as Contemporary*, 62, 63.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 50.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 63.

and self-sufficiency of the infinite happiness of the Triune God, who is, as Schweitzer puts it, “at once radically transcendent to creation and at the same time internally related to it in a positive way.”¹⁰⁷ Accordingly, as God’s infinite being implies that God “must comprehend in himself all being,”¹⁰⁸ God’s infinite happiness, as established by the Trinity in Misc. 94, must include all divine and creaturely happiness.

The *infinite*, eternal, and perfect happiness of the Father and the Son is that which grounds the independence and immutability of God with respect to the “very end” of God’s *ad extra* communicative goodness to (happily) make the creature happy. Recall Edwards’s sermonising from this same period:

How good is God, that he has created man for this very end, to make him happy in the enjoyment of himself, *the Almighty, who was happy from the days of eternity in himself, in the beholding of his own infinite beauty: the Father in the beholding and love of his Son*, his perfect and most excellent image, the brightness of his own glory; *and the Son in the love and enjoyment of the Father. And God needed no more....’Twas not that he might be made more happy himself, but that [he] might make something else happy; that he might make them blessed in the beholding of his excellency...*¹⁰⁹

Indeed, it is the *infinite happiness* of the Son and Father that Edwards emphasises throughout his treatment of the Son. After a very brief biblical defense of the Son of God as the perfect “image of God,” Edwards elaborates on this doctrine using biblical material about God’s “infinite happiness.” The repeated emphasis on the “infinite” delight and happiness of the Father and Son is intentional, demonstrating the Son as the sole object and enjoyment of God’s infinite happiness:

Again, that image of God which God infinitely loves and has his chief delight in, is the perfect idea of God. It has always been said, that God’s infinite delight consists in reflecting on himself and viewing his own

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 64.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Edwards, *Nothing on Earth can Represent the Glories of Heaven*, WJE 14, 153 (emphasis added).

perfections, or which is the same thing, in his own perfect idea of himself; so that 'tis acknowledged, that God's infinite love is to, and his infinite delight in, the perfect image of himself...The Son also declares that the Father's infinite happiness consisted in the enjoyment of him, Prov. 8:30, "I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him."

Now none, I suppose, will say that God enjoys infinite happiness in two manners, one in the infinite delight he has in enjoying his Son, his image, and another in the view of himself different from this. If not, then these ways wherein God enjoys infinite happiness are both the same; that is, his infinite delight in the idea of himself is the same with the infinite delight he has in his Son; and if so, his Son and the idea he has of himself are the same.¹¹⁰

As Edwards will write almost twenty years later in *Treatise on Grace*, the Son is "all" the Father's delight, his "infinite objective happiness."¹¹¹ The happiness of the Father and the Son is the infinite, perfect happiness of God, which means that it is impossible for God to "be made more happy" in relation to his purposes for the creation.

The infinite happiness of God explains the relationship of the Father and the Son. The Augustinian analogy is utilised, but it is elaborated in terms of happiness. For Augustine, the Son of God is the knowledge of God and the Trinity is completed by love: "The mind itself, its love and its knowledge are a kind of trinity; these three are one, and when they are perfect they are equal."¹¹² Love explains Augustine's Trinity: "Behold, when I, who conduct this inquiry, love something, then three things are found: "I, what I love, and the love itself...There are, therefore, three things: the lover, the beloved, and the love."¹¹³ However, for Edwards it is not love *per se*, but love *and delight*, i.e. the infinite *happiness* of God that explains the Trinity.

Edwards, furthermore, writes that the "Word of God" is God's perfect idea, his Son, "in which God enjoys infinite happiness."¹¹⁴ And similarly, the Son

¹¹⁰ Edwards, Misc. 94, *WJE* 13, 258-59.

¹¹¹ Edwards, *Treatise on Grace*, *WJE* 21, 189.

¹¹² Augustine, *Augustine: On the Trinity*, ed. Gareth B. Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 27-28.

¹¹³ *Ibid*, 25-26.

¹¹⁴ Edwards, Misc. 94, *WJE* 13, 259.

of God is the “reason or wisdom of God,” in which he “infinitely delights.”¹¹⁵

Edwards argues extensively and uniquely on the basis of the infinite happiness of God in order to establish his doctrine of the Son as the divine image, Word, reason, and wisdom of God. The illustration with which Edwards concludes his discussion of the Son of God also manifests this purpose. While Augustine’s illustration utilises creaturely *love*, Edwards’s utilises creaturely *happiness*:

There is very much of [an] image of this in ourselves. Man is as if he were two, as some of the great wits of this age have observed. A sort of genius is in man that accompanies him and attends wherever he goes; so that a man has a conversation with himself, that is, he has a conversation with his own idea. *So that if his idea be excellent, he will take great delight and happiness in conferring and communing with it; he takes complacency in himself, he applauds himself...And man is truly happy then, and only then, when these two agree, and they delight in themselves, and in the own idea and image, as God delights in his.*¹¹⁶

God’s happiness is one. God’s happiness in his “idea” and his “complacency in himself” are the same. Recall the source of ‘danger’ in Misc. 92: “God takes complacency in communicating felicity, and he made all things for this complacency.” Edwards appears intent to defend God’s one *ad intra* infinite happiness as dependent solely on the perfect idea or Son of God, which is inclusive of the “complacency” he takes in himself and his goodness, in a way that might protect God from any charge of dependence or mutability.

Establishing the infinite and eternal happiness of the Son and Father in order to protect God’s aseity is of enduring utility for Edwards’s project. In a 1754 ordination sermon, Edwards proclaims that in light of Christ’s sacrifice offered for the “salvation and happiness of the souls of men,” it is nevertheless true that:

God is self-sufficient; his happiness is in himself; as his being is necessary and underived, so is his happiness and glory. ‘Tis underived as to any cause or author: no other being is the author of [it]. ‘Tis underived as to the fountain and [the] object in the enjoyment of which he is happy: enjoyment of himself. Indeed, the eternal, infinite happiness

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 260.

¹¹⁶ Ibid (emphasis added).

of the divine being seems to be social, consisting in the infinitely blessed union and society of the persons of the Trinity, so that they are happy in one another: so God the Father and God the Son are represented as rejoicing from eternity, one in another; Proverbs 8:30, "Then was I by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him." So that, according to our imperfect way of conceiving and speaking of things, the persons of the Trinity gave one another happiness as [they] derived happiness one from another. But this argues no dependence on any other being; on the contrary, it shows God's absolute independence on the creature.¹¹⁷

Thus, I am suggesting that a central and primary aim of Misc. 94 is to, in light of Misc. 92, firmly establish "God's absolute independence" on the basis of the infinite and eternal happiness of "God the Father and God the Son...rejoicing from eternity, one in another," and that, for the sake of his teleology of happiness.

3.3.3.5 *The Holy Spirit: Source of all Happiness*

Edwards's effort to establish the foundation of his teleology of happiness in Misc. 94 is nowhere more discernable than by his doctrine of the Holy Spirit, who is the infinite happiness of the Father and Son. The Spirit, "the infinite delight" of God, the *actus purus* of the Godhead according to Edwards, establishes the self-sufficiency and independence of God's life and infinite happiness *and* identifies the Spirit as the source of creaturely happiness. Thus, Edwards's doctrine is able to establish both the transcendence and the immanence of the happiness of God for the sake of his Trinitarian teleological vision.

Edwards enhances the Augustinian mutual love tradition by attributing to the Spirit *delight* in addition to love, which is a unique doctrinal move William Schweitzer refers to as the Spirit's "double duty."¹¹⁸ In this way, Edwards is able to attribute "delight" to the Holy Spirit, which is his primary concern:

¹¹⁷ Edwards, Sermon # 1114, *Works of Jonathan Edwards Online*, Vol. 25, 662-63.

¹¹⁸ Schweitzer, *God is a Communicative Being*, 25. Muller mentions love, holiness, goodness, grace, power, and glory as common attributes of the Holy Spirit, but joy, delight, and happiness rarely appear. Muller, *PRRD4*, 356-81.

The Holy Spirit is the act of God between the Father and the Son infinitely loving and *delighting* in each other. Sure I am, that if the Father and the Son do *infinitely delight* in each other, there must be an infinitely pure and perfect act between them, an infinitely sweet energy which we call *delight*.¹¹⁹

This doctrine appears to be primarily aimed at making the Holy Spirit the delight, or happiness, of God, as Edwards writes almost twenty years later in *Treatise on Grace*, “In the infinite love and delight that is between these persons consists the infinite happiness of God.”¹²⁰ Studebaker, Caldwell, and Seng-Kong Tan overlook this emphasis due to the fact that they read Edwards’s Trinitarian theology, and thus his doctrine of the Holy Spirit, primarily through the lens of “mutual love,”¹²¹ which is common to Edwards’s Reformed tradition. Ames writes, “the Holy Spirit, flowing and breathed from the Father through the Son, is Deus Dilectus, God loved,”¹²² and Neele observes that Mastricht refers to the Spirit as “love.”¹²³ Likewise, Burton demonstrates that Baxter illustrates the third person of the Trinity by the “divine principle” of love.¹²⁴ Whether Keckermann, Ainsworth, Burman, Baxter, Stackhouse, or John Edwards, who writes that God’s “Loving himself, and the Son, is the Holy Ghost,”¹²⁵ the primary attribution of the third person in the Reformed Augustinian model is *love*. Yet, Edwards makes the unique move of attributing delight and happiness to the Holy Spirit, inspired perhaps by Owen, who writes, “God’s love of himself...consists in the mutual complacency of the Father and Son by the Spirit.”¹²⁶ This mutual love and

¹¹⁹ Edwards, Misc. 94, 260.

¹²⁰ Edwards, *Treatise on Grace*, 184.

¹²¹ Studebaker and Caldwell, *Trinitarian Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 61; Seng-Kong Tan, *Fullness Received and Returned: Trinity and Participation in Jonathan Edwards* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014), 17, 71-72.

¹²² Ames, *Marrow*, 89.

¹²³ Neele, *The Art of Living to God*, 223.

¹²⁴ Burton, *Hallowing of Logic*, 234-35.

¹²⁵ Muller, *PRRD4*, 162-65.

¹²⁶ John Owen, *The Works of John Owen*, ed. William H. Goold, Vol. I (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1965), 145.

“complacency,” which is termed “delight” – and even “love and delight”¹²⁷ – in other places in the Owen corpus, is “the principle part of the blessedness of God,” according to Owen.¹²⁸ Edwards, therefore, appears to use the resources of his own tradition to structure a doctrine of the Trinity for the sake of his teleology of happiness. By attributing happiness to the Holy Spirit, Edwards will be able to identify the Spirit as the source of creaturely happiness, as with Misc. 233, “Holy Spirit. Trinity” of 1726:

The Apostle’s *Blessing*, wherein he wishes “the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and communion of the Holy Ghost” [II Cor. 13:14], contains not different things but is simple: ’tis the same *blessing*, even the Spirit of God, which is *the comprehension of all happiness*.¹²⁹

The infinite happiness of both the Spirit *and* the Godhead is furthermore established by Edwards’s utilisation of the doctrine *actus purus*, or ‘pure act.’ The *actus purus* of God is, according to Edwards, the perfect and infinite “delight” of God:

Sure I am, that if the Father and the Son do infinitely delight in each other, there must be an infinitely pure and perfect act between them, an infinitely sweet energy which we call delight. This is certainly distinct from the other two; the delight and energy that is begotten in us by an idea is distinct from the idea. So it cannot be confounded in God, either with God begetting or [with] his idea and image, or Son. It is distinct from each of the other two, and yet it is God; for the pure and perfect act of God is God¹³⁰

While for Keckermann, knowledge represents the *actus purus* of God,¹³¹ for Edwards the “perfect act” of God is “delight,” which reveals continuity with the medieval tradition, as with Aquinas’s “divine beatitude,” which is “the pure and

¹²⁷ John Owen, *Select Works of John Owen*, Vol. II, ed. C. Bradley (London, 1831): For Owen on “delight and complacency” see pp. 101, 184, 235, 358, and for “love and delight, see pp. 183, 250.

¹²⁸ Owen, *Works*, I, 145.

¹²⁹ Edwards, Misc. 223, *WJE* 13, 346 (emphasis added).

¹³⁰ Edwards, Misc. 94, *WJE* 13, 260.

¹³¹ Keckermann, quoted by Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 106.

perfect actuality of the divine being.”¹³² The implications of defining the “pure act” of God in terms of “delight” are significant. First, the infinite and eternal essence of the Godhead is defined as delight, as Edwards writes, “the delight of God is properly a substance, yea an infinitely perfect substance, even the essence of God.”¹³³ Second, as “delight” defines the distinction of the third person of the Trinity, the *ad extra* operation of the Spirit is particularly associated with “delight”:

It appears by the Holy Scriptures, that the Holy Spirit is the perfect act of God...it appears that the Holy Spirit is the pure act of God and energy of the Deity, by his office, which is *to actuate and quicken all things, and to beget energy and vivacity to the creature.*

The ‘quickenings’ and ‘vivifying’ *ad extra* operation of the Holy Spirit is most ultimately aimed at the creature’s “delight”: “The Holy Spirit’s name is the Comforter; but no doubt but *’tis the infinite delight God has in himself*, in the Comforter, *that is the fountain of all delight and comfort.*”¹³⁴

As with Maastricht and other Reformed theologians, Edwards’s ontological Trinity is revealed by the *ad extra* operations of the Triune God, whose “end of creation” is to communicate delight and happiness by the gift of the Holy Spirit. In fact, Edwards’s one illustration for the pure act of God’s delight, the Holy Spirit, utilizes a human analogy with the same terminology Edwards had recently used in Misc. *tt*, defending the “devotion” of even a “lifetime in an ecstasy” as the creature’s “highest end.” He writes:

There is an image of this in created beings that approach to perfect action: how frequently do we say that the saints of heaven are all transformed into love, dissolved into joy, become activity itself, changed into mere ecstasy.¹³⁵

Therefore, from several angles, Edwards’s doctrine of the Spirit reveals his teleological agenda for happiness, as it is particularly shaped by his conception

¹³² Muller, *PRRD3*, 60.

¹³³ Edwards, Misc. 94, *WJE* 13, 261.

¹³⁴ Ibid (emphasis added).

¹³⁵ Ibid, 260-61.

of the *ad extra* operation of the Spirit, who is the *actus purus* and “delight” of God.

Edwards’s first articulation of his doctrine of the Trinity in Misc. 94 appears to be written for the sake of his teleological project, rather than polemics related to the antitrinitarian controversies. Both the content and context of this notebook entry indicate that Edwards’s primary agenda is establishing a Trinitarian foundation for his teleology of happiness. Edwards enhances the Augustinian mental analogy in order to demonstrate the happiness of the Triune God by drawing on the Reformed and medieval traditions in creative ways. The emphasis and particular content related to happiness in Misc. 94 is unique and it appears particularly aimed at explaining the infinite happiness of the Triune God, which establishes both an orthodox doctrine of God in light of the dangerous “complacency” of God in relation to God’s telic purposes for the creature’s happiness *and* a doctrine of divine happiness capable of explaining the source of the creature’s happiness in Trinitarian terms. Thus, with Misc. 94, Edwards continues his defense of happiness as ultimate *telos* within a Reformed theological framework by establishing the infinite and perfect happiness of the Trinity, which both defends an orthodox doctrine of God and builds a Trinitarian foundation for his teleology of happiness.

3.4 The Happiness of God’s Goodness

Having articulated the happiness of the Triune God in Misc. 94 for the sake of establishing a foundation for the Trinitarian orthodoxy of his teleology of happiness, Edwards returns to the goodness of God, the central doctrine of his teleological agenda. In order to further defend his teleology in light of the “dangerous” comments of Misc. 92, Edwards turns to fortify his teleological framework from the perspective of the perfect *ad intra* goodness of God. Recall that Edwards defends his teleology of happiness in Misc. 92 by stating that the creation is “for God” in that God gratifies “a natural inclination,” and “takes

complacence in communicating felicity...he made all things for this complacence...in making happy,” which is “the end of creation.”¹³⁶ As Holmes has observed, this appears to make “God’s own happiness dependent on creation.”¹³⁷ Thus, in order to fortify the aseity of God from the perspective of the divine goodness, Misc. 96, “Trinity,” establishes the fact that the communicative goodness of God represents, not only an external operation of the Godhead, but a perfect internal exercise of the Godhead.¹³⁸ By this doctrine of the *ad intra* goodness of God, Edwards means to demonstrate that the “complacence,” or happiness, of God that appears to be in relation to, *and dependent on*, the creation in Misc. 92 is actually solely dependent on God, his own “natural inclination,” his own goodness. Thus, the aim of Misc. 96, “Trinity,” is not a reasonable argument for the Trinity *per se*, but rather a defense of the orthodoxy of Edwards’s teleology. By providing a Trinitarian framework for the “perfect” *ad intra* goodness (and happiness) of God in Misc. 96, Edwards will be able to assert that the divine “complacence” associated with God’s goodness is happiness *in his own goodness*, thus avoiding the problem of dependency.

Edwards first step in Misc. 96 is to articulate the common Reformed doctrine of the “perfect” *ad intra* communicative goodness of the Trinity,¹³⁹ by which God is understood to be infinitely and perfectly happy:

It appears that there must be more than a unity in infinite and eternal essence, otherwise the goodness of God can have no perfect exercise. To be perfectly good is to incline to and delight in making another happy in the same proportion as it is happy itself, that is, to delight as much in communicating happiness to another as in enjoying of it himself, and an inclination to communicate all his happiness; it appears that this is

¹³⁶ Edwards, Misc. 92, *WJE* 13, 256.

¹³⁷ Holmes, *God of Grace and God of Glory*, 37.

¹³⁸ Wendelin argues that the *ad intra* Trinitarian goodness is “*natural* and necessary,” an indication that Edwards’s phrase, “*natural* inclination” of God, in Misc. 92, is meant to describe the *ad intra* goodness of God. Wendelin, quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 508-9.

¹³⁹ “The Reformed orthodox also recognize that, in view of the Trinitarian nature of God, this ultimate goodness ought not to be viewed as monolithic or static: God’s goodness *in se* or *ad intra* is communicable.” Muller, *PRRD3*, 508.

perfect goodness, because goodness is delight in communicating happiness.¹⁴⁰

While Edwards certainly argues that the “perfect exercise” of the *ad intra* “goodness of God” requires plurality in the Godhead, it is equally true that Edwards explains the “natural inclination” of God to exercise perfect goodness by happily communicating happiness. Thus, God exists in perfect happiness on the basis of the perfect *ad intra* (Trinitarian) exercise of goodness, which means that the “complacence” that attends God’s goodness *ad extra* might be justly considered complacence in *God’s own goodness (ad intra)*, and thus, *not* dependent on the creation, which is the precise argument utilised by Edwards in subsequent notebook entries dealing with his teleology.

Reformed systems routinely ground God’s goodness *ad extra* on the basis of God’s goodness *ad intra*, as with Leigh, who writes, “God’s Goodness is an essential property whereby he is infinitely and of himself good, and the author and cause of all goodness in the creature,”¹⁴¹ and Voetius, “There are no outward impelling causes (of creation)...The divine goodness is inward: the good diffuses and communicates itself.”¹⁴² Charnock’s articulation is especially noteworthy, as it communicates precisely what we perceive to be Edwards’s purpose. God’s goodness *ad extra*, writes Charnock, is “but the breathing of *his own goodness*,” so that he “gives all, and receives nothing.”¹⁴³ Indeed, Misc. 96 (and Misc. 94) is written, not merely for the sake of Trinitarian doctrine *per se*, but for the sake of defending the orthodoxy of Edwards’s teleology of happiness.

From the perspective of the divine happiness, the perfect *ad intra* goodness of God also argues like Misc. 94 for the perfect *ad intra* delight of God, as he writes, “goodness is delight in communicating happiness,” and, “Wherefore, *if this goodness be perfect this delight must be perfect*, because

¹⁴⁰ Edwards, Misc. 96, *WJE* 13, 263.

¹⁴¹ Leigh, quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 507.

¹⁴² Voetius, quoted by Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 195.

¹⁴³ Charnock, *Existence and Attributes of God*, Vol. II, 211 (emphasis added).

goodness and this delight are the same.”¹⁴⁴ Therefore, on the basis of God’s perfect *ad intra* goodness, Edwards argues for perfect divine happiness, which furthermore protects God from any dependence on the creation. God has perfect happiness on the basis of *his own perfect goodness*, therefore, neither additional happiness nor any dependence on the creature relative to the divine goodness and happiness is feasible.

The aseity of God is in this respect furthermore indicated by the fact that the perfect *ad intra* communication of happiness of God is, as Edwards writes, “all” of God’s happiness:

Goodness in the exercise is communication of happiness; but if that communication be imperfect, that is, if it be not of all the happiness enjoyed by the being himself, the exercise of the goodness is imperfect...¹⁴⁵

God’s perfect exercise of goodness and communication of happiness *ad intra* necessarily communicates “all” of God’s happiness, which point Edwards soon after reveals as central to his teleology of happiness in Misc. 104, “End of Creation”:

And we have shown also, that the Father’s begetting of the Son is a complete communication of all his happiness, and so an eternal, adequate, and infinite exercise of perfect goodness, that is completely equal to such an inclination in perfection [No. 96].¹⁴⁶

Thus, Edwards has in Misc. 96 argued for the logic of the Trinity, but a greater agenda is manifest: The infinite and eternal happiness communicated between the Father and the Son, that “perfect” *ad intra* exercise of goodness, means that God’s *ad intra* goodness and happiness is “eternal, adequate, and infinite,” even, and especially, in relation to God’s delight in communicating happiness to the creature.

¹⁴⁴ Edwards, Misc. 96, *WJE* 13, 263-64.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 264.

¹⁴⁶ Edwards, Misc. 104, *WJE* 13, 272.

Edwards's next notebook entry, No. 97, "Happiness," is solid evidence that Edwards has the defense of God's aseity with respect to the divine happiness in mind, as he rejects, on the basis of Misc. 96, the notion that God might "receive additions of happiness":

As [to what] was said in No. 96...Now it is necessary that to those whom we love most, we should have the strongest desire of communicating happiness – to any but one that has infinite, and cannot receive additions of happiness. And although God is the object of the creature's love (of a creature not depraved), yet God being infinitely happy, he cannot desire to communicate his happiness to Him, which is nothing to the happiness God enjoys.¹⁴⁷

Since God enjoys "infinite" happiness, he "cannot receive additions of happiness" from the creature, the foundation for which is solidly established by his two entries on the "Trinity," Misc. 94 and Misc. 96. The infinite and perfect happiness of the *ad intra* Trinity is established in Misc. 94 and the perfect happiness of the *ad intra* divine goodness is grounded by Misc. 96, which render additions to the divine happiness as inconceivable and the aseity of God secure, in light of Edwards's teleology of happiness.

This issue is not of passing interest for Edwards. Establishing the infinite and perfect happiness of God on the basis of the perfect *ad intra* communicative goodness of the Trinity endures, as it is essential to Edwards's teleological vision to make "happiness the end of creation." Even as late as 1753, just prior to penning *End of Creation*, and just subsequent to an important entry on the end of creation, Misc. 1218, Edwards records these lines by the French Catholic theologian Andrew Michael Ramsay in Misc. 1253:

Thus it is certain that antecedent to all communicative goodness towards anything external, God is good in himself...Infinitely good, because from the knowledge and enjoyment of his consubstantial idea flows an infinite sensation of joy, unbounded joy, an unspeakable pleasure, and an eternal self-complacency, which constitutes his uninterrupted

¹⁴⁷ Edwards, Misc. 97, *WJE* 13, 264.

happiness...He does not therefore want to create innumerable myriads [of] finite objects to exert his essential beneficence and equity.¹⁴⁸

Ramsay makes the point that the infinite and eternal *ad intra* goodness and happiness of God renders him absolutely free of any “want” relative to the creation. God’s joy, pleasure, and “eternal self-complacency, which constitutes his uninterrupted happiness,” is grounded in the fact that “God is good in himself,” and so God is without “want” relative to his “communicative goodness towards anything external.” God’s aseity is established on the basis of God’s communicative goodness and perfect felicity, as “God’s consubstantial love of himself” is “sufficient to complete the felicity of his infinite will.”¹⁴⁹ Edwards’s intention has been the same in these early writings, to lay a foundation for the orthodoxy of his teleology by his doctrine of God and the Trinity articulated in terms of the infinitely perfect *ad intra* goodness and happiness of God.

The defense of the orthodoxy of Edwards’s teleology of happiness on the basis of the perfect *ad intra* goodness and happiness of God is developed throughout Edwards’s career. McDermott is keen to observe, “Throughout the course of his career Edwards worked to accommodate God’s delight to divine perfection.” However, this is not in order to oppose the deist doctrine of God, as McDermott suggests,¹⁵⁰ but rather, for the sake of defending the orthodoxy of his Reformed teleology of happiness. Misc. 271, Misc. 448, and *End of Creation* each demonstrate Edwards’s continued efforts in this regard, as they are teleological writings aimed at explaining the divine happiness that relates to God’s *ad extra* goodness as the happiness of God’s own perfect goodness in order to protect God from the charge of additional happiness and dependence on the creature, which demonstrates the enduring nature of Edwards’s purpose to defend happiness as ultimate *telos*.

¹⁴⁸ Edwards, Misc. 1253, *WJE* 23, 186-87.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ McDermott, *Jonathan Edwards Confronts the Gods*, 90.

Misc. 271, “End of the Creation,” written in late 1726, repeats the general thesis of Misc. 92 that the creation is both for God and for “the communication of happiness of the creatures”:

...God should be the ultimate end of the creation as well as the cause, that in creating he should make himself his end... (And the Scripture saith...God hath made all things for himself). And this may be, and yet the reason of his creating the world be his propensity to goodness, and the communication of happiness to the creatures be the end.¹⁵¹

Edwards returns to the reasoning of Misc. 92 and Misc. 96 to reason that the creation is “for” God in that God makes himself his end *and* “the communication of happiness to the creatures be his end,” due to the fact that God is happy communicating happiness. To reconcile these seemingly disparate ends, Edwards again justifies his teleology of happiness on the basis of the happiness of God’s own goodness: “God is really happy in loving his creatures”:

...because in so doing he as it were gratifies a natural propensity in the divine nature, viz. goodness. Yea, and he is really delighted in the love of his creatures and in their glorifying him, because he loves them, not because he needs. For he could not be happy therein, were it not for his love and goodness. Col. 1:16, “All things were made by him and for him,” that is for the Son.¹⁵²

Therefore, in 1726, Edwards continues to explain his theocentric doctrine of creation (the creation is “for” God) on the basis of the happiness of God’s goodness, rather than the traditional glory of God. Of course the creature glorifies God in Edwards’s teleological vision, yet in order to support and defend the communication of happiness as *telos*, Edwards makes the happiness of God’s goodness the reconciling doctrine, which explains both the theocentric and the telic aspect of the “end of the creation.”

Holmes appears to miss this point in his analysis of Misc. 271, concluding, “Once again, the problem is God’s dependence on the world for his own fulfillment, as the ‘joys’ of the Son are not complete without His creaturely

¹⁵¹ Edwards, Misc. 271, *WJE* 13, 374.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

Bride.”¹⁵³ Yet, as Edwards explains, the “joys” of God the Son are the “joys” of God’s own love, ie. goodness. The creation, writes Edwards, is for the Son of God (“for God”) *and* “for” the “mutual joys between this bride and bridegroom” as “the end of creation.” God’s happiness exists in relation to the creature and at the same time, foundationally independent of the creature. As Edwards writes, God is “delighted...because he loves them, not because he needs. For he could not be happy therein, were it not for his love and goodness.”¹⁵⁴ God’s happiness derives from his own love and goodness, and therefore, the creation is “for” God, fulfilling the requisite theocentric character of Edwards’s Reformed doctrine of creation without utilising the traditional glory of God.

Thus, the happiness of God’s goodness is able to frame Edwards’s orthodox Reformed teleology of happiness due to the fact that it explains the following three things: First, the creation is “for” God; God is God’s own “end” in creating, in that God is happy communicating his goodness for the sake of the creature’s happiness. Second, the creation is “for” the creature in that God is happy exercising his goodness for the sake of communicating happiness to the creature. 3. Third, the aseity of God: God is happy in his own goodness, “he gratifies a natural propensity in the divine nature, viz. goodness.” Edwards draws from the resources of the Reformed tradition on the goodness and happiness of God in order to avoid subordinating the happiness of the creature to the glory of God in the teleological scheme by presenting the happiness of God’s own goodness as the basis for the crucial Reformed axiom that, in light of God’s communication of happiness as “the end of creation,” the creation is indeed, “for God.” The happiness of God’s goodness, therefore, is the key doctrine that enables Edwards to defend his teleology of happiness from the perspective of the rigorously theocentric Reformed doctrine of creation, more traditionally stated in terms of the manifest glory of God *ad extra*.

¹⁵³ Holmes, *God of Grace and God of Glory*, 39.

¹⁵⁴ Edwards, Misc. 271, *WJE* 13, 374.

Edwards can be observed developing the same logic three years later during the fall of 1729 in Misc. 448, “End of the Creation,” writing, “there is no way that the world can be “for” God more than [this]”: God’s “delight in his own act,” that is, his delight, “not properly from the creature’s communication to God, but in his to the creature.” The creation is not “for” the glory of God *per se*, but “for” God’s delight, his delight in “his own act” of communication, or goodness, which protects the aseity of God, whose communication to the creature is “not that he may receive....’tis not that they may add to him, but that God might be received by them.”¹⁵⁵ God’s “delight in his own act” is the key to protecting the orthodoxy of Edwards’s doctrine of God, and teleology:

It is said that God hath made all things for himself...they are created for God’s pleasure; that is, they are made that God may in them have occasion to fulfill his good pleasure, in manifesting and communicating himself. *In this God takes delight, and for the sake of this delight God creates the world. But this delight is not properly from the creature’s communication to God, but in his to the creature; it is a delight in his own act.* Let us explain the matter how we will, there is no way that the world can be “for” God more than [this]; for it can’t be so for him, as that he can receive anything from the creature.¹⁵⁶

God’s act of communication is not for the sake of God’s glory, but rather, for the sake of God’s “delight” in “manifesting and communicating himself,” which is a delight in his own goodness, and therefore it is not “for him, as that he can receive anything from the creature.”¹⁵⁷ Thus, God’s delight in his own goodness, which represented the initial threat to Edwards’s orthodoxy in Misc.

¹⁵⁵ Edwards, Misc. 448, *WJE* 13, 496.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid (emphasis added).

¹⁵⁷ Ibid. The phrase “for the sake of this (God’s) delight” does not make the creature’s happiness subordinate to God’s happiness. In Misc. 221 Edwards explains that the phrase, “for the sake of...implies that the thing we speak of will be *for the advantage of that person*...Wherefore, when we pray for grace for the sake of Christ, we should intend thereby to desire God to remember that *’twill be to his Son’s joy and happiness*; for the bestowment of God’s grace upon us *was the joy that was set before him*...And therefore ’tis for his sake we may ask of God, *for our grace is his joy*.” Edwards, Misc. 221, *WJE* 13, 345-46. Therefore, for Edwards, “for the sake of” does not imply a subordinate end as a “means” to another end, but rather it implies “advantage,” i.e. “joy and happiness.”

92, is explained and developed throughout the 1720s as the very thing that preserves God's aseity and supports the Reformed conviction that the creation is "for God," while at the same time protecting the high teleological status of creaturely happiness and avoiding opposition and subordination to the glory of God.

This same basic argument can be found in Edwards's mature statement, *End of Creation*, which, written during the mid-1750s, firmly attests to the enduring nature of Edwards's efforts to protect an orthodox doctrine of God for the sake of his Reformed teleology of happiness. In *End of Creation*, Edwards responds to the theoretical "objection," that his teleology is "inconsistent with God's absolute independence and immutability," particularly "that God makes himself his end, in the creation of the world":

...seems to suppose that he aims at some interest or happiness of his own, not easily reconcilable with his being happy, perfectly and infinitely happy in himself.¹⁵⁸

Edwards's first answer points to the happiness of God's goodness, which doctrine he perceives to have been overlooked: "Many have wrong notions of God's happiness." God's happiness, asserts Edwards, does not result "from his absolute self-sufficiency, independence, and immutability," but rather, from his *goodness*:

God may have a real and proper pleasure or happiness in seeing the happy state of the creature: yet this may not be different from his delight in himself; being a delight in his own infinite goodness...gratifying this inclination of his own heart. This delight, which God has in his creature's happiness can't be properly said to be what God receives from the creature. For 'tis only the effect of his own work in, and communications to the creature...¹⁵⁹

Once again, the happiness of God's goodness defends Edwards's teleology of "the happy state of the creature," as God's delight in the happiness of the

¹⁵⁸ Edwards, *End of Creation*, WJE 8, 445.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, 446.

creature is, in fact, “his delight in himself...his own infinite goodness.” Had it been Edwards’s agenda to defend the manifestation of the divine glory by his “end of creation” project, as most scholars assume, this argument would be unnecessary. The doctrine of the happiness of God’s perfect *ad intra* goodness emerges in the 1720s in order to defend God’s aseity and the theocentric character of Edwards’s doctrine of creation for the sake of the orthodoxy of Edwards’s teleology of happiness, and it endures throughout Edwards’s career, which attests to the enduring nature of his teleology of happiness.

3.5 The Problem of the Perfect Happiness of God

Due to the fact that Edwards defends the orthodoxy of his teleology of happiness on the basis of the infinite and perfect *ad intra* happiness of the Trinity and the perfect *ad intra* goodness of the Triune God, he realises that he must also explain why it is that God communicates *ad extra* at all? In other words, why does God exercise goodness and communicate happiness *ad extra* if the *ad intra* goodness and happiness of God’s triune life is infinitely perfect and complete? While several scholars assume that this query represents the starting point of Edwards’s teleological project,¹⁶⁰ it will be demonstrated that this question emerges from within the context of Edwards’s defense of the orthodoxy of his already established teleology of happiness.

Misc. 104, “The End of the Creation,” does not represent an unbiased open-ended inquiry, but rather, it arises from within the development of Edwards’s work in Misc. 87, 92, 94, and 96 aimed at fortifying his teleology of happiness:

And we have shown also, that the Father’s begetting of the Son is a complete communication of all his happiness, and so an eternal, adequate and infinite exercise of perfect goodness, that is completely equal to such an inclination in perfection [No. 96]. *Why, then, did God*

¹⁶⁰ See McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 207; Morimoto, “The End for Which God Created Jonathan Edwards,” 33; Holmes, *God of Grace and God of Glory*, 32-33.

*incline further to communicate himself, seeing he had done [so] infinitely and complete?*¹⁶¹

Edwards's Christocentric, and as I will argue, redemptive historical, answer is that while it is true that "the Son is the adequate communication of the Father's goodness...an express and complete image of him,"

But yet the Son has also an inclination to communicate himself, in an image of his person that may partake of his happiness: and this was the end of the creation, even the communication of the happiness of the Son of God.¹⁶²

McDermott claims that this entry demonstrates Edwards's accommodation to an Enlightenment creed for the sake of his Christian apologetic: "In 1724 Edwards co-opted the Enlightenment obsession with human happiness to argue for the disinterested virtue of the deity."¹⁶³ Holmes, on the other hand, interprets this entry through a strictly philosophical theological perspective, and thus deems the entry a failure with respect to Christian orthodoxy:

Edwards realizes that now, according to his earlier accounts, God has no reason to create...The problem is created by Edwards' embracing of Trinitarian doctrine, and it is to that doctrine he turns for the answer: the Son also has the desire to communicate Himself...*This is brilliant, but still fails...now the Son's fulfillment depends on the creation, so God still needs the world. Edwards, however, seems not to see either this difficulty or any solution to it, as he is silent on the subject for nearly four years.*¹⁶⁴

Holmes and McDermott each miss the mark. Edwards is attempting neither a strictly philosophical theological explanation of God's purpose to communicate happiness to the creation, nor is he "co-opting" Enlightenment happiness to reinterpret deist notions of God and his purposes in Christocentric terms. Rather, Edwards is explaining an infinitely and eternally perfect and happy God's communication of happiness *ad extra, in terms of the gospel*, or Christ's

¹⁶¹ Edwards, Misc. 104, *WJE* 13, 272.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ McDermott, *Jonathan Edwards Confronts the Gods*, 90.

¹⁶⁴ Holmes, *God of Grace and God of Glory*, 38 (emphasis added).

work of redemption, as with John Owen, who likewise reflects on Christ's "mysterious communication *of himself*":

...and all the benefits of his mediation, unto the souls of them that do believe, *to their present happiness and future eternal blessedness.*"¹⁶⁵

Edwards's Christocentric perspective should appear neither as unorthodox, nor "surprising."¹⁶⁶ As we have discussed several times, Edwards has the *ad extra* economic operations of the Son and the Spirit in mind as he develops his teleology of happiness. The early *Miscellanies* and sermons foreshadow this same Christocentric-soteriological conception of God's communicative goodness by highlighting the happiness of salvation and union with Christ, and Misc. 94 reveals clear hints of a pneumatology that will serve Edwards's teleological vision. Misc. 97 and 98 also reveal Edwards's inclination to articulate his teleology of happiness in Christocentric and redemptive historical terms, as Edwards writes in Misc. 97, "Happiness":

But in the gospel God is come down to us, and the person of God may receive communications of happiness from us. The man Christ Jesus loves us so much, that he is really the happier for our delight and happiness in him.¹⁶⁷

Clearly for Edwards, the incarnation of the Son of God and "the gospel" contribute to explaining the communication of happiness paramount to his teleological vision, as Christ and the gospel provide a basis for the divine and creaturely happiness of God's "end of creation." In his very next entry, Misc. 98, "Trinity," Edwards writes about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, who is "nothing but the infinite love and delight of God, by his symbol, a dove."¹⁶⁸ Thus, the Christocentric explanation of the communication of happiness to the creature in

¹⁶⁵ Owen, *Meditations and Discourses on the Glory of Christ*, 360 (emphasis added).

¹⁶⁶ "In a surprising move, Edwards insisted that "the Son has also an inclination to communicate himself in an image of his person that may partake of his happiness," and that "this was the end of creation." Pauw, *The Supreme Harmony of All*, 129 (emphasis added).

¹⁶⁷ Edwards, Misc. 97, *WJE* 13, 264.

¹⁶⁸ Edwards, Misc. 98, *WJE* 13, 265.

Misc. 104 represents a continuation of Edwards's reflections on the economy of redemption for the sake of understanding his teleology of happiness, particularly the problem of God's perfect happiness, which Edwards comprehends in terms of "the communication of the happiness of the Son of God."

Edwards's redemptive historical perspective on his teleology of happiness becomes increasingly clear throughout the remainder of the text. Edwards goes on to write about the church in relation to the Son, through whom the gift of happiness is granted: "the church is the completeness of Christ (Eph. 1:23)," and "so nearly united to Christ that she is one with him," even "partakers of his glory", "the objects of his communication of his goodness," in which is "the Son's delight." Thus, 'union' with Christ and 'partaking' of Christ explain the happiness of the creature, as in the early notebook entries. This is what Edwards is indicating when he writes of the Son's "inclination to communicate himself, in an image of his person that may partake of his happiness." The Son's "inclination to communicate himself" is not a philosophical theological, or even Trinitarian, solution *per se*, as Holmes implies; it represents, rather, the inclination of the Son to come into the world in order to give himself for the salvation and happiness of God's people. The corollaries of Misc. 104 also support this reading: "Then doubtless, he is the proper and fit Person to be the Redeemer of men." The church will be "so nearly united to Christ...and their glory and honor and happiness shall be so astonishing great as is spoken in the Scripture." The Son of God is obviously the creator and the governor of the world, according to Edwards, "seeing that the world was a communication of him, and seeing the communicating of his happiness is the end of the world."¹⁶⁹ As William Schweitzer writes, "ultimately, Jesus Christ is the "one grand medium" of God's communicative project."¹⁷⁰

Further evidence that Edwards has redemption and soteriology in mind is his discussion of the "the Holy Spirit, or Comforter," as "the third person in

¹⁶⁹ Edwards, Misc. 104, *WJE* 13, 272-73.

¹⁷⁰ Schweitzer, *God is a Communicative Being*, 30.

Christ,” his delight and love flowing out towards the church. “In believers the Spirit and delight of God, being communicated unto them, flows out toward the Lord Jesus Christ.”¹⁷¹ Lastly, union with Christ is once again revealed as central, as Edwards concludes by quoting Jesus speaking about that union in John 17:21-24, and proclaiming, “How glorious is the gospel, that reveals to us such things!”¹⁷² Thus, the gospel of Christ is what explains the possibility of an infinitely and perfectly happy God communicating happiness to the creature.

Ultimately, redemption explains God’s aim in creation, the communication of his happiness to the creature, as Pauw writes, regarding Misc. 104, “Creation *and redemption* are progressive movements in God’s aim for union with creaturely reality....Creation is *in order to redemption*.”¹⁷³ The integration of the redemptive-soteriological aspect of the economic Trinity with Edwards’s teleology is representative of a continuous effort that is unfortunately never perfectly fulfilled by Edwards. Perhaps his planned “body of divinity...being thrown into the form of a history”¹⁷⁴ would have seen this effort come to fruition. Nevertheless, I will continue to highlight Edwards’s efforts in this regard, as they demonstrate Edwards’s efforts to ground his teleology of happiness in a Reformed, Trinitarian, and redemptive historical framework.¹⁷⁵

The strikingly similar language of Charnock makes it difficult to believe that Edwards does not receive significant inspiration for Misc. 104 from his writings:

He gave himself in the creation to us in the image of his holiness; *but in redemption, he gave himself in the image of his person*: he would not

¹⁷¹ Edwards, Misc. 104, *WJE* 13, 273.

¹⁷² *Ibid*, 273-74.

¹⁷³ Pauw, *The Supreme Harmony of All*, 130 (emphasis added). See also Schweitzer, *God is a Communicative Being*, 19.

¹⁷⁴ Edwards, “Letter to the Trustees of the College of New Jersey,” *WJE* 16, 727-28.

¹⁷⁵ If the philosophical theological problem of God’s perfect happiness appears to remain unsolved by Misc. 104 (as Holmes claims), it is crucial to remember that for the Reformed, God’s communicative goodness in creation - *and grace in redemption* - is *utterly free*, which means that the gospel of redemption through Christ (or perhaps the eternal covenant of redemption), *can* represent a solution, as the *freedom* of redemption maintains the *freedom* of God’s goodness.

only *communicate the goodness* without (outside of) him, but bestow upon us the infinite goodness of his own nature; *that that which was his own end and happiness might be our end and happiness, viz. himself.*¹⁷⁶

Goodwin's Exposition on Ephesians, which Edwards quotes later in his career, also articulates the communication of "pleasure and happiness" through union with and partaking of Christ and the indwelling Spirit, in light of God's "infinite life and happiness":

So that now it is plain, that God having infinite life and happiness [...] (for what is the life of God, but his own holiness and happiness, and the entireness of his own nature, for his own blessedness, for his own pleasure?), God hath ordained, and laid up eternal life in his decree; but Jesus Christ is to be eternal life, to communicate that life that is in himself to us, I John 1:1. [...] God purposed, that man should live in union and communion with him, partake of that life that he himself lives and communicates it as far as the creature is capable....and enjoy this new wine, which is the Holy Ghost filling us with the Godhead, that is filling us with the pleasures and blessedness that is in God himself. Here then is one thing that sitting in heavenly places doth imply, it is enjoying the same pleasure and happiness that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ himself doth.¹⁷⁷

Thus, the articulation of Misc. 104 should not be seen as surprising, strange, or an unorthodox failure. Edwards draws from the orthodoxy of his Puritan and Reformed heritage in order to defend his teleology as theologically sound, especially with respect to the economic work of the Son and the Spirit, who in addition to demonstrating the infinite and eternal communicative happiness of the Godhead *a se*, likewise explain God's utterly free *ad extra* communication of happiness to the creature in terms of the economy of redemption.

The happiness-centric teleological vision of Misc. 104 does not exist due to the fact that Edwards "co-opted the Enlightenment obsession with happiness," as McDermott asserts. Edwards is attempting to explain his teleology of happiness in the terms of the Reformed tradition. The Reformed context, with respect to both Edwards's sources and his purpose, allows us to see that Misc.

¹⁷⁶ Charnock, *Existence and Attributes of God*, 269 (emphasis added).

¹⁷⁷ Thomas Goodwin, quoted by Edwards, Misc. 1274, *WJE* 23, 218, 220-21.

104 is not, as several scholars claim, a surprising failure to which Edwards is oblivious. The Reformed Edwards assumes that the economic saving work of God through Christ and the Spirit *ad extra* is an utterly free communication of divine goodness that inherently protects the aseity of God.¹⁷⁸ To say that Misc. 104 makes God dependent on the creation is to say that *the gospel* makes God dependent on the creation, which would have been unthinkable to Edwards. By overlooking the Reformed context and failing to perceive the internal context and Edwards's purpose, McDermott and Holmes, each in their own way, miss the meaning and significance of this important *Miscellanies* entry wherein Edwards works to defend the teleological status of God's communication of happiness to the creature in terms palatable to his Reformed tradition, especially demonstrating Christ and the gospel as the "grand medium" of God's communication of happiness.¹⁷⁹

3.6 The Happiness of the Holy Spirit

Further evidence of Edwards's teleological agenda for happiness is his relentless effort throughout the 1720s to confirm the "double duty" of the Spirit first declared in Misc. 94, the "love *and delight of God*." A multitude of *Miscellanies* entries explore this theme for the sake of defending happiness as *telos* from the perspective of the economic Trinity, particularly the indwelling of the Spirit, the immediate source of the creature's happiness. Based on his exegetical work, Edwards can even call the Holy Spirit, with reference to the *ad extra* operation, "the comprehension of all happiness." Thus, Edwards is not, as Holmes suggests regarding Edwards's "end of creation" project, "silent on the

¹⁷⁸ Recall Wendelin: "The second communication is free, and by it God communicates his goodness to creatures." Wendelin, quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 508-9.

¹⁷⁹ Hans Boersma's excellent treatment of Edwards's beatific vision argues for the Platonic, yet theophanic *and particularly Christocentric* character of Edwards's version of the beatific vision. Hans Boersma, "The 'Grand Medium': An Edwardsean Modification of Thomas Aquinas on the Beatific Vision," *Modern Theology*, 33:2 (2017): 187-212.

subject for nearly four years.”¹⁸⁰ Rather, when the entire context of his teleological writings is appreciated, this development of Edwards’s pneumatology subsequent to Misc. 87 and Misc. 94 and throughout the 1720s is demonstrated as intended to defend Edwards’s teleology of happiness.

While Schafer claims that, subsequent to writing Misc. 94, Edwards transitions away from describing the Spirit in terms of “delight,” and toward “divine love,”¹⁸¹ my research reveals that Edwards’s concern to articulate the Holy Spirit in terms of delight and happiness continues in robust fashion throughout the 1720s. Misc. 98, “Trinity,” is an early example. This entry explains the *indwelling of the Spirit* on the basis of the doctrine of Misc. 94 that “the Holy Spirit is nothing but the infinite love and delight of God.”¹⁸² Love is certainly not unimportant to Edwards’s pneumatology, however he continually strives to include *delight* and *happiness*, as with Misc. 117, “Trinity,” which even defines love in terms of happiness: “Love is certainly the perfection as well as happiness of a spirit.”¹⁸³ Later in 1724, in Misc. 143, “Trinity,” Edwards describes the Spirit as “that personal energy, the divine love and delight.”¹⁸⁴ Soon after, in Misc. 146, “Trinity,” he writes, “there is no other affection in God essentially, properly and primarily, but love and delight – and that in himself, for into this is his love and delight in his creatures resolvable.”¹⁸⁵ In fact, two years later, immediately preceding two consecutive entries about the “giving of the Holy Spirit” for the saints’ “communion” or “partaking of the Holy Ghost,” Edwards focuses strictly on “joy and delight” when he writes in Misc. 209, “Holy

¹⁸⁰ Holmes, *God of Grace and God of Glory*, 38-39. Holmes appears to be aware that Holy Spirit is important to Edwards’s teleology, yet his Trinitarian reading intentionally avoids this crucial theme at this stage: “The Spirit is mentioned several times in the *Miscellanies* entry under discussion, but the references are not integral to the line I am tracing.” Ibid, 38, n. 21.

¹⁸¹ Schafer, *WJE* 13, 367, n. 7.

¹⁸² Edwards, Misc. 98, *WJE* 13, 265.

¹⁸³ Edwards, Misc. 117, *WJE* 13, 283.

¹⁸⁴ Edwards, Misc. 143, *WJE* 13, 298.

¹⁸⁵ Edwards, Misc. 146, *WJE* 13, 299.

Ghost,” that the Spirit is “called the oil of gladness [Ps. 45:7; Heb. 1:9], being the infinite joy and delight of God.”¹⁸⁶

At times Edwards will focus on the Holy Spirit as “love,” but this is normally due to a particular focus, as with Misc. 220, on “gospel righteousness, virtue, and holiness,” thus, Edwards writes, “the Holy Spirit in man...is grace or love.”¹⁸⁷ Edwards, naturally associates “grace or love” with Christian holiness and virtue. Yet, just three entries later in 1726, Edwards states that the Holy Spirit is the “comprehension of all happiness” in Misc. 223, “Holy Spirit. Trinity.” Referring to the *ad extra* operation of the Spirit, Edwards reasons that the grace, love, and communion with the Spirit of 2 Cor. 13:14 are one, “the same blessing, even the Spirit of God, which is the comprehension of all happiness.”¹⁸⁸ Thus, Edwards’s agenda appears to be to confirm by as many biblical texts as possible the idea that the Holy Spirit is the delight or happiness of God, which clearly supports the defense of the communication of happiness as God’s ultimate design for the creature.

Admittedly, almost immediately after Misc. 223, Edwards returns to a focus on love in Misc. 225, 226, and 227, each entitled, “Holy Spirit,”¹⁸⁹ however, this is not an indication that Edwards has changed his mind with respect to the happiness of the Spirit. Edwards conceives of the Spirit as love *and* delight; he never argues for one *instead* of the other. Our point is merely that Edwards persists in uniquely attributing delight and happiness to the Holy Spirit, for the sake of his teleology of happiness. Of course not every entry about the Spirit has this focus. Misc. 297, written in mid-1727, is another good example that when Edwards focuses on love it is often due to a particular biblical text or theological focus. In this entry, Edwards says that the “nature of the Holy Ghost” is love, but this is specific to his purpose, which is to explain “Sin Against the Holy Ghost,” the title of that entry, which obviously correlates with love, rather

¹⁸⁶ Edwards, Misc. 209, 210, 211, *WJE* 13, 342.

¹⁸⁷ Edwards, Misc. 220, *WJE* 13, 345.

¹⁸⁸ Edwards, Misc. 223, *WJE* 13, 346.

¹⁸⁹ Edwards, Misc. 225, 226, 227, *WJE* 13, 346-47.

than delight: Edwards opposes “spite and malice and scorn,” as “directly contrary to the nature of the Holy Ghost, who is love.”¹⁹⁰ Similarly, the Spirit of God is understandably named “love” in Misc. 303, which is about “Solomon’s Song” and written during this same period.¹⁹¹ Likewise, Misc. 305 declares that “the Holy Ghost is love” with reference to certain biblical texts having to do with the love of the saints. Yet again, this notion is never set against the Spirit as delight or joy or happiness, as Edwards concludes that very entry with I Thess. 1:6, describing “*the joy of the Holy Ghost*,” as well as Romans 14:17, “The kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, *and joy in the Holy Ghost*.”¹⁹²

Misc. 259, “Trinity,” written in the spring of 1728, expands on the idea first articulated in Misc. 94, that there exist “no more than these three really distinct in God: God, and his idea, and his love or delight,”¹⁹³ and Edwards’s very next entry, No. 260, “Trinity,” includes this description of the *ad extra* operation of *the Holy Spirit*, “*God’s delight and joy*”:

The oil that signifies the Holy Ghost, with which Christ is anointed, is called the “oil of gladness.” *The Holy Ghost is God’s delight and joy* (Ps. 45:7). Is. 61:3, “the oil of joy for mourning”; they anointed themselves to express joy.¹⁹⁴

Similarly, in Misc. 330, “Holy Ghost,” written during the summer of 1728, Edwards argues explicitly for a doctrine of the Spirit inclusive of “delight,” which appears to be synonymous with “happiness,” on the basis of his doctrine of the *ad extra* operations of the Holy Spirit:

It appears that the Holy Spirit is the holiness, or excellency and delight of God, because our communion with God and with Christ consists in our partaking of the Holy Ghost....Communion, we know, is nothing else but the common partaking with others of good: communion with God is

¹⁹⁰ Edwards, Misc. 297, *WJE* 13, 385.

¹⁹¹ Edwards, Misc. 303, *WJE* 13, 390.

¹⁹² Edwards, Misc. 305, *WJE* 13, 390-91 (emphasis added).

¹⁹³ Schafer, *WJE* 13, 367, n. 7.

¹⁹⁴ Edwards, Misc. 260, *WJE* 13, 368 (emphasis added).

nothing else but a partaking with him of his excellency, his holiness and happiness.¹⁹⁵

Likewise, Misc. 334, “Trinity,” focuses on defining the Holy Spirit *ad intra* on the basis of the *ad extra* operations with an intense focus on “delight and pleasure”:

'Tis a confirmation of it, that the river of water of life spoken of in the 22nd of Revelation, which proceeds from the throne of the Father and the Son, is called the river of God's pleasures (Ps. 36:8): *'tis a confirmation that the Holy Ghost is the infinite delight and pleasure of God.* That river is the Holy Ghost...¹⁹⁶

Soon after, in Misc. 336, “Trinity,” Edwards states that the “all the metaphorical representations of the Holy Ghost in the Scripture...represent the perfectly active flowing affection, holy love and pleasure of God.”¹⁹⁷ And, similarly, in the spring of 1729, Edwards calls the Spirit, in “Trinity,” Misc. 405, “the divine essence flowing out, or breathed forth, in infinite love and delight,” or “God's love to and delight in himself.”¹⁹⁸

Edwards's focus on the happiness of the Spirit endures throughout his career, as *Treatise on Grace*, written in the early 1740s, bears witness:

God's love is primarily to himself, and his infinite delight is in himself, in the Father and the Son loving and delighting in each other...*In the infinite love and delight that is between these two persons consists the infinite happiness of God...the Holy Spirit...*¹⁹⁹

Therefore, throughout the 1720s and the decades that follow, Edwards exhibits a special concern to confirm that attributing joy, delight, and happiness to the Holy Spirit is soundly biblical, which supports his teleology of happiness from a biblical and Trinitarian Reformed perspective. The scholarship has failed to

¹⁹⁵ Edwards, Misc. 330, *WJE* 13, 409.

¹⁹⁶ Edwards, Misc. 334, *WJE* 13, 411 (emphasis added).

¹⁹⁷ Edwards, Misc. 336, *WJE* 13, 412.

¹⁹⁸ Edwards, Misc. 405, *WJE* 13, 468.

¹⁹⁹ Edwards, *Treatise on Grace*, *WJE* 21, 184 (emphasis added). Recall that Owen articulates a nearly identical doctrine: This mutual love and “complacency,” which is termed “delight” – and even “love and delight” in other places in the Owen corpus – is “*the principle part of the blessedness of God.*” Owen, *Works*, I, 145.

observe this effort due to a lack of appreciation for the developmental context from which Edwards's teleology - and pneumatology - emerges during the 1720s. Edwards's doctrine of the happiness of the Spirit is another example that Edwards is intensely focused on defending a Trinitarian and redemptive historical teleology of happiness from a Reformed perspective.

3.7 Participation in the Happiness of the Spirit

Developing alongside Edwards's doctrine of the happiness of the Spirit during the 1720s is his doctrine of the creature's participation in the happiness of the Spirit, to which we have already alluded. According to Edwards, through the gospel of Christ, the creature is united to Christ and "partakes" of the communication of God's Spirit, or happiness, which represents the "end of the creation." As McClymond and McDermott have argued, "creaturely participation" in God is the "corollary" to "Trinitarian communication" and a primary aspect of Edwards's theology.²⁰⁰ This doctrine, which emerges in the 1720s subsequent to Edwards's writings on the Trinity in Misc. 94 and Misc. 96, manifests strong continuity with the medieval view, especially Aquinas's doctrine of participation in the 'one' happiness of God, discussed previously in Chapter 1. As Seng-Kong Tan writes of Edwards view, "the mere 'happiness of men' in Adam has become, in Christ, a participation in 'a sort of the very happiness of God himself.'"²⁰¹

²⁰⁰ McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 5.

²⁰¹ Tan, *Fullness Received and Returned*, 343. Interpretations of Edwards's understanding of 'participation' vary. Tan argues that Edwards's doctrine does not imply *theosis*, akin to Aquinas in that "the saint participates dynamically in the divine workings or nature," and "not in God's essence." *Fullness Received and Returned*, 343, 301. While Crisp believes that "Edwards most certainly does endorse a doctrine of *theosis*," he also observes that Edwards protects the Creator-creature distinction with a "species of *theosis*" that avoids comingling the divine essence. Crisp, *Jonathan Edwards on God and Creation*, 166-73. McClymond and McDermott liken Edwards to the Eastern Orthodox, especially Palamas's teaching on "divinization." McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 410-423. Caldwell is convinced that Edwards's doctrine does not imply *theosis*, or divinization. Robert W. Caldwell, *Communion in the Spirit: The Holy Spirit as the Bond of Union in the Theology of Jonathan Edwards*

While Edwards has been content to define happiness as the *perception of* God, his work on the happiness of the Trinity enables him to begin to articulate happiness as *participation in* God through Christ, and by the Spirit. This is not an entirely new concept for Edwards. Recall that Edwards's early sermons describe spiritual happiness as a function of "possessing" God's goodness, and Misc. *tt.* defends the notion of the "highest end" as the "immediate communication" between God and intelligent being, which Edwards explicitly associates with the Holy Spirit.²⁰² Edwards's earliest explicit mention of 'participation' language is Christocentric and refers to union with Christ for the sake of explaining his teleology of happiness in Misc. 104, "End of the Creation," which we have already discussed: "But yet the Son has also an inclination to communicate himself, in an image of his person that may *partake of his happiness*."²⁰³ During this same period in early-1724, Edwards pens a sermon aimed at defending his teleology of happiness, *Nothing on Earth Can Represent the Glories of Heaven*, in which Edwards writes:

How great, then, will the glory and blessedness of believers [be], when they shall fully enjoy this their head and husband, when they shall *partake* of his own glory, as the spouse *partakes* of the happiness of him to whom she is espoused.²⁰⁴

(Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2007), 192. Ross Hastings offers an extensive, nuanced treatment that likens Edwards to Eastern Orthodoxy, which he argues does maintain the Creator-creature distinction through the doctrinal distinctions of the divine "essence and energies." See W. Ross Hastings, *Jonathan Edwards and the Life of God: Toward an Evangelical Theology of Participation* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2015).

²⁰² "I, for my part, am convinced of an *immediate communication between the Spirit of God and the soul of a saint*; because when a person is in the most excellent frame, most lively exercise of virtue, love to God and delight in him, he naturally and unavoidably thinks of God as kindly communicating himself to him, and holding such a manner of communion with [him]..." Edwards, Misc. 138, *WJE* 13, 296 (emphasis added).

²⁰³ Edwards, Misc. 104, *WJE* 13, 272-73 (emphasis added). McClymond and McDermott's development theory implies that Edwards first employs the doctrine of communication for the sake of his teleology during 1727-28, with Misc. 332. McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 213.

²⁰⁴ Edwards, *Nothing on Earth can Represent the Glories of Heaven*, *WJE* 14, 155 (emphasis added).

Relatedly, the seemingly abrupt inclusion of “possession” language in Edwards’s definition of happiness during this same time is another indication that Edwards is grappling with this subjective aspect of his teleology of happiness.²⁰⁵ In Misc. 106, “Happiness,” Edwards states, “happiness” is, as “we have showed....the perception and possession of excellency.”²⁰⁶ Recall that Edwards’s early definition of happiness is foundationally intellectualist: The “nature of happiness” is the “perception of excellency,” i.e. to “perceive what God is and does,”²⁰⁷ which definition fits his teleology of happiness as stated in Misc. 87. Schafer admits that he is confused by the mysterious reference to happiness as perception *and possession*,²⁰⁸ however, happiness as “possession” certainly makes sense of Edwards’s early sermons and the traditional Reformed doctrine, i.e. happiness as the possession of the good.²⁰⁹ Furthermore, Edwards is likely referring to his sermon, *Nothing on earth can represent the glories of Heaven*, which is written just prior to Misc. 106 and again, is focused on explaining Edwards’s teleology of happiness:

Now 'tis evident, then, man is made with *a nature capable of great happiness*: for he has created him with a mind that is capable of very great knowledge, and of high and excellent affections, even of loving God; but he that has a nature capable of knowing and loving God, has a nature capable of enjoying of [God]: for beholding and loving *and possessing* is enjoying.²¹⁰

As “Possessing” is particularly associated with “loving,” and coupled with “knowing” or “beholding,” Edwards reveals his emerging *Trinitarian* conception of happiness, especially influenced by his doctrine of the Spirit, the “love and

²⁰⁵ ‘Possession’ and ‘participation’ are of course distinct concepts, however they belong to a similar category capable of explaining the creature’s reception of God’s communication of happiness.

²⁰⁶ Edwards, Misc. 106, *WJE* 13, 276.

²⁰⁷ Edwards, Misc. 87, *WJE* 13, 252.

²⁰⁸ Schafer, *WJE* 13, 276.

²⁰⁹ Edwards, *Fragment: Application On Seeking God*, *WJE* 13, 383.

²¹⁰ Edwards, *Nothing on earth can represent the glories of Heaven*, *WJE* 14, 151 (emphasis added). Notice as well that “great happiness” and “enjoying” are synonymous.

delight” of God, by whom believers come to “possess,” or partake of, God and his goodness and happiness, which supports the development of Edwards’s Trinitarian teleology of happiness.

A group of Miscellanies entries written in 1726 demonstrate Edwards’s persistent interest in the theme of participation as it relates to the Holy Spirit and the creature’s happiness. In Misc. 209, “Holy Ghost,” Edwards calls the Holy Ghost, based on Psalm 45:7 and Hebrews 1:9, “the oil of gladness...being the infinite joy and delight of God.”²¹¹ Then, in the following entry, Misc. 210, “Spirit of God,” Edwards declares, “man’s reason and conscience seem to be a *participation of the divine essence*,”²¹² In the following entry, Misc. 211, Edwards writes on the basis of 2 Corinthians 13:14, “[by] the word “communion” seems to be meant our communion or our common partaking of the Holy Ghost with other saints.”²¹³ Soon after, Misc. 223 and 227 reveal a very similar line of thought. In Misc. 223, Edwards calls the Spirit of God, “the comprehension of all happiness” in *ad extra* terms, referring specifically to the “Holy Ghost dwelling in us,”²¹⁴ and then, in Misc. 227, Edwards argues that it is by the Holy Spirit, “we are made partakers of the divine nature.”²¹⁵

Two years later in 1728, Edwards writes in Misc. 330, “our communion with God and with Christ consists in our partaking of the Holy Ghost,” which is a “partaking with him of his excellency, his holiness and happiness.”²¹⁶ Edwards soon after writes three entries on the “Trinity,” the purpose and progression of which reveal his continuing effort to explain the *ad extra* work of the Holy Spirit communicated, and participated in, for the sake of happiness. Edwards first defines the Holy Spirit in Misc. 334 and 336 as “the infinite delight and pleasure of God,” and “the holy love and pleasure of God,” concluding in Misc. 336, “So the Holy Ghost is said to be poured out and shed forth...as love is said to be

²¹¹ Edwards, Misc. 209, *WJE* 13, 342.

²¹² Edwards, Misc. 210, *WJE* 13, 342 (emphasis added).

²¹³ Edwards, Misc. 211, *WJE* 13, 342.

²¹⁴ Edwards, Misc. 223, *WJE* 13, 346.

²¹⁵ Edwards, Misc. 227, *WJE* 13, 347.

²¹⁶ Edwards, Misc. 330, *WJE* 13, 409.

shed abroad in our hearts [Rom. 5:5].”²¹⁷ Then soon after, Edwards reasons in Misc. 341 that the Holy Ghost is the blessing, or happiness, of the saints:

He wishes grace and love from the Son and the Father, but the communion of the Holy Ghost, that is, the partaking of him. The blessing from the Father and the Son is the Holy Ghost; but the blessing of the Holy Ghost is himself, a communication of himself.²¹⁸

Furthermore, this language of the blessing of the Holy Spirit as the “communication of himself” in Misc. 341 is indeed in concert with Edwards’s “end of creation” project, as he writes in Misc. 332, “End of the Creation,” the great and universal end of God’s creating the world “was to communicate himself.”²¹⁹ The Spirit is the communication of God and his happiness to the creature.

During this same time, Edwards can be found defending the attribution of “joy and delight” to the Spirit on the basis of the Spirit’s *ad extra* operation to communicate happiness. The “Spirit of God is spiritual joy and delight,” reasons Edwards, due to the fact that the “earnest,” or “first-fruits” of our future inheritance, “that happiness spoken of that God will give his saints, is nothing but a fullness of his Spirit.”²²⁰ Indeed, soon after in Misc. 370, Edwards describes the Spirit as that which explains the image of God’s glory *ad extra* in the creature, even the communication of God’s love and *happiness*:

The Spirit, as it is God’s infinite love and happiness, is as the internal heat of the sun; but as it is that by which God communicates himself, is as the emitted beams of God’s glory. II Cor. 3:18, “We are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”²²¹

The Spirit, God’s “infinite love and happiness,” is that by which God communicates himself and that by which the creature participates in God’s nature, as with Misc. 376, “Trinity”: “’Tis in our partaking of the Holy Ghost that

²¹⁷ Edwards, Misc. 334, *WJE* 13, 411; Edwards, Misc. 336, *WJE* 13, 412.

²¹⁸ Edwards, Misc. 341, *WJE* 13, 415.

²¹⁹ Edwards, Misc. 332, *WJE* 13, 410.

²²⁰ Edwards, Misc. 364, *WJE* 13, 436.

²²¹ Edwards, Misc. 370, *WJE* 13, 441.

we have communion with the Father and Son and with Christians: this is the common excellency and delight in which they all [are] united.”²²² Edwards’s 1729 sermon, *The Threefold Work of the Holy Ghost*, demonstrates this theme, the indwelling Spirit, participated in by the creature for spiritual happiness:

The Holy Ghost is he that, after salvation is procured, immediately possesses them of it all. Though Christ procures all, he confers all; ‘tis he that converts the sinner, that brings him out of darkness; ‘tis he unites to Christ. He gives holiness and he gives the happiness purchased....And not only so, but ‘tis he that immediately gives eternal life also. ‘Tis he that perfects holiness, and ‘tis he that perfects the spiritual happiness of the soul. Then they will be perfectly holy and happy forever, because the Holy Spirit fills them.²²³

Christ procures happiness, but the Spirit “possesses” saints of God’s happiness via communication and participation. As Edwards states about one year prior in Misc. 367: “Christ by his righteousness purchased for everyone perfect happiness,” and then in Misc. 402, soon after during the spring of 1729, Edwards can write: “The sum of all that Christ purchased is the Holy Ghost.”²²⁴ Participation in the Holy Spirit is the happiness of the saints purchased by Christ, as with the “Spirit’s Operation” of grace in Misc. 481, which Edwards writes, “not only consists the highest perfection and excellency, but the happiness of the creature.”²²⁵

These notebook entries and sermons treating the *ad extra* operation of the Holy Spirit in terms of communication, participation, and possession demonstrate that, subsequent to Misc. 94 during the 1720s, Edwards is persistently intent to establish the biblical warrant for attributing joy, delight, and happiness to the Spirit for the sake of explaining his teleology of happiness, as the Spirit’s communicating, possessing work *ad extra* is ultimately aimed at “the happiness of the creature,” who partakes of God by the Spirit, “the comprehension of all happiness.”

²²² Edwards, Misc. 376, *WJE* 13, 448.

²²³ Edwards, *The Threefold Work of the Holy Ghost*, *WJE* 14, 434-35.

²²⁴ Edwards, Misc. 367, *WJE* 13, 437; Edwards, Misc. 402, *WJE* 13, 466.

²²⁵ Edwards, Misc. 481, *WJE* 13, 523.

3.8 Conclusion

These important *Miscellanies* notebook entries and sermons from the 1720s on the subject of the happiness of God reveal the beginnings of Edwards's intense effort to defend his teleology of happiness from a Reformed, Trinitarian, and redemptive historical perspective. Subsequent to his proof of happiness as ultimate *telos* explained on the basis of God's goodness in Misc. 87, Edwards shifts his focus toward articulating this teleology in such a way as to avoid subordinating happiness relative to the divine glory and make happiness ultimate *telos*. By establishing the happiness of God as it relates to God's goodness, the Trinity, and the *ad extra* economic work of the Son, and especially the Holy Spirit, Edwards builds a Reformed framework for his teleology of happiness. For the sake of defending a Reformed teleology of happiness, Edwards selectively and creatively draws on his Puritan and Reformed heritage to both anchor the orthodoxy of his doctrine of God, and to establish the Triune God, particularly the Holy Spirit, as the source of the happiness of the creature, the communication of which is the "end of creation." Edwards's abundant emphasis on the happiness of God within these early writings are, thus, evidence that Edwards's primary concern is not the antitrinitarian controversies or deism, nor the question of God's reason for creation, nor a theocentric defense of God's glory, but rather, the defense of his Reformed teleology of *happiness*.

Chapter 4. The Happiness of Redemption

4.1 Introduction

“As Edwards’s spiritual worldview begins to take shape,” writes Bombaro, “it incorporates and develops fundamental theological concepts of God, the Trinity, the work of Christ and the Spirit, and the entire drama of redemption in time.”¹ Having demonstrated in the previous chapter the way in which Edwards integrates the biblical and theological concepts of “God, the Trinity, the work of Christ and the Spirit” for the sake of defending his teleology of happiness during the 1720s, the present chapter will reveal Edwards’s similar purpose with respect to the “drama of redemption.” As we have repeatedly observed, the development of Edwards’s teleology of happiness exhibits a constant appreciation for the work of redemption, and this focus heightens during the 1730s when Edwards’s writings on this subject increase and demonstrate a particular aim at bolstering his teleology of happiness. The communication of God’s goodness and happiness, the teleological doctrine for which Edwards has established a Trinitarian framework during the 1720s, is shown by Edwards as realised solely through Christ and the work of redemption, which perspective is common to the Reformed tradition.²

Strobel has argued that the “teleology for Edwards’s theological task” is realized as Edwards “interpreted all reality through the lens of the gospel and, ultimately, God’s own life.”³ The previous chapter has described the relationship of Edwards’s teleology with “God’s own life,” particularly his happiness, and the present chapter will examine the way “the gospel,” or work of redemption, serves to establish Edwards’s Reformed teleology of spiritual happiness. Relatedly, Edwards’s soteriology, which, according to Sang Lee, “is to be viewed

¹ Bombaro, *Jonathan Edwards’s Vision of Reality*, 93.

² Seventeenth century theologian Melchior Leydecker writes, “*God communicates his goodness by making creatures and by blessing them in creation, providence, and redemption.*” Bac, *Perfect Will Theology*, 18 (emphasis added).

³ Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards’s Theology*, 2.

within the larger framework of God's chief end in creation,"⁴ will also be considered, as it also contributes to convincing Edwards of the redemptive historical aspect of his teleology of happiness. Edwards's teleology and theology derive from his Christocentric and redemptive historical interpretation of Scripture,⁵ and thus, throughout his career, especially during the 1730s, Edwards explores various aspects of the biblical account of redemption for the sake of defending his Reformed teleology of happiness.

John Wilson has also emphasized the close connection between Edwards's "end of creation" and "work of redemption" projects, writing, it is "necessary, to recognize that Edwards anchors his reflections about history in Reformed doctrine about the "End for Which God Created the World.""⁶ Similarly, McClymond and McDermott suggest, "one might read *End of Creation* as supplying the bookends for the historical material to be included in the great work," "A History of the Work of Redemption."⁷ Thus, if Strobel, Wilson, McClymond, and McDermott are right about this interrelationship, Edwards's reflections on redemption ought to provide us with insight into the character and development of Edwards's teleology. Indeed, many of the texts on redemption reveal the same burden of Edwards's teleological writings, happiness as ultimate *telos*. In fact, it appears that the motivation and purpose of much of Edwards's redemptive historical writing from the 1730s is to bolster Edwards's teleology of happiness, especially for the sake of demonstrating spiritual happiness as ultimate *telos*, in no way subordinate to God's glory in the teleological scheme.

⁴ Sang Hyun Lee, "Editor's Introduction," *WJE* 21, 100.

⁵ According to Doug Sweeney, Edwards's biblical hermeneutic is represented by the following categories of exegesis: canonical, Christological, redemptive-historical, and pedagogical. Douglas A. Sweeney, *Edwards the Exegete: Biblical Interpretation and Anglo-Protestant Culture on the Edge of the Enlightenment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), x. "Redemption, through Christ's work," writes Strobel, "is the central thread that shapes Edwards's entire theological project." Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology*, 4.

⁶ John F. Wilson, "History," *The Princeton Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, 216-17.

⁷ McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 183-84.

The consensus opinion of the scholarship, however, is that Edwards's "work of redemption" writings primarily aim to demonstrate the teleological import of the glory of God. Wilson is representative, claiming that Edwards conceives of redemptive history predominantly as a divine "self-glorification" project.⁸ Lee characterises Edwards's view of the good of the creature, i.e. "redemption," as subordinate, or "'the means" to God's end of glorifying himself from all eternity."⁹ Bombaro argues from this perspective as well, writing, "According to Edwards, God's mechanism for achieving total self-glorification through self-communication is the work of redemption."¹⁰ Likewise, Zakai argues that, "history," for Edwards, "is a sacred space of time destined from eternity for God's self-glorification – the display of the Deity's excellence in creation – as evidenced in his work of redemption."¹¹ Similar to the consensus view of Edwards's overall theological project, the scholarship focused on Edwards's history project overwhelmingly assumes that by this project, Edwards intends to defend the glory of God. Again, the theme of God's glory is not unimportant to Edwards, however, what these redemptive historical texts reveal is that the spiritual happiness of the creature is Edwards's particular teleological concern. Thus, in what follows, I will demonstrate the way that the content and context of Edwards's writings on Christ and the work of redemption during the 1730s reveal his purpose to bolster his teleological vision for happiness as ultimate *telos*.

We have already observed Edwards's teleological conviction about happiness in his writings about Christ and the gospel from early 1720s. The goal of God's redemptive work through Christ, as he proclaims in Glorious Grace, "'Twas only that we might be happy."¹² Edwards reveals the centrality of Christ and the gospel for his teleological framework, as previously discussed, in

⁸ Wilson, "History," 216.

⁹ Ibid, 103, n. 9.

¹⁰ Bombaro, *Jonathan Edwards's Vision of Reality*, 88.

¹¹ Zakai, *Jonathan Edwards's Philosophy of History*, 21.

¹² Edwards, Glorious Grace, *WJE* 10, 394.

Misc. 104, which describes the “end of the creation” in redemptive terms, “even the communication of the happiness of the Son of God.”¹³ As with Charnock, who writes, “in redemption, he gave himself in the image of his person: he would communicate himself...bestow upon us the infinite goodness of his own nature; that that which was his own end and happiness might be our end and happiness, viz. himself,”¹⁴ Edwards conceives the ultimate goal of the work of redemption to be the happiness of God’s people through their union with Christ and the gift of the Spirit. God’s communication of happiness arrives through the gospel of Christ and by the Holy Spirit, who is the happiness of the Son and the Father communicated to the creature on the basis of the work of redemption. Indeed, these efforts ground Edwards’s teleology of happiness in the Trinitarian and redemptive historical framework required of any Reformed teleological vision. Thus, Edwards’s earlier Trinitarian and redemptive historical writings from the 1720s demonstrate that the explicit “work of redemption” texts of the 1730s, which I will discuss below, represent Edwards’s continued focus on the redemptive historical perspective for the sake of defending his teleology of happiness from a Reformed perspective.

4.2 A Sermonic Teleology of Happiness

The integration of the redemptive historical aspect of Edwards’s teleology of happiness emerges in a profound way in a sermon that is preached at least seven times throughout the 1720s entitled, *Nothing on Earth Can Represent the Glories of Heaven*.¹⁵ The sermon, which boldly reaffirms the teleological framework of Misc. 87 in sermonic form, defends the notion that “God created

¹³ Edwards, Misc. 104, *WJE* 13, 272.

¹⁴ Charnock, *Existence and Attributes of God*, Vol. II, 269.

¹⁵ This sermon was preached in Scantic, New Haven, Fairfield, New York, Bolton, Glastonbury, and Northampton. Kenneth P. Minkema, *WJE* 14, 136. This indicates that Edwards’s teleology of happiness represents an enduring topic of Edwards’s thinking and preaching throughout the 1720s. Minkema comments on the popularity of the sermon: “it is difficult to determine whether the many reprechings mean that this was an early favorite of Edwards or of his audiences, but it may have been both.” Ibid.

man for nothing else but happiness” on the basis of the biblical portrayal of the happy consummation of redemptive history described in the book of Revelation. In fact, Edwards’s re-preaching notes intensify the focus on his teleology of happiness by replacing both the primary text and the first doctrinal point, which is updated to read: “We shall prove that the godly are designed for exceeding great happiness.”¹⁶ Thus, this seldom-analyzed sermon, written in January or February 1724, just subsequent to Misc. 87 and Misc. 94, is further evidence that Edwards is intensely interested in defending his teleology of happiness in Reformed terms, particularly with respect to redemptive history. It seems there is no more important subject in all divinity for Edwards. Understanding and being convinced of this ultimate happiness, he writes, is “the main thing and what is most needful.” That “the godly are designed for exceeding great happiness,” is a matter of ultimate significance:

And upon this we shall chiefly insist, as being the main thing and what is most needful. This is what men want to be really and thoroughly convinced [of], that such an happiness does await those that love and fear God.¹⁷

Edwards’s thesis about happiness as ultimate *telos* is more than a theological or philosophical conviction; it is also biblical, and eminently pastoral. The text of the sermon represents more than a sermonic recapitulation of his teleology, rather Edwards proclaims happiness as the ultimate goal of God’s redemptive work as portrayed in the 21st chapter of Revelation. Having already established a philosophical and theological framework for his teleology in his private notebooks, with this sermon Edwards takes advantage of his preaching duties in order to ground (and publically proclaim) his teleology of happiness within the redemptive plotline of Scripture.

The original text of the sermon is based on Revelation 21:18, “And the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass,” stating as its doctrine, “There is

¹⁶ Edwards, *Nothing on Earth can Represent the Glories of Heaven*, WJE 14, 145, n. 7.

¹⁷ Ibid.

nothing upon earth that will suffice to represent to us the glories of heaven.”¹⁸ In the introduction, Edwards describes his intention to show that the “ultimate end and drift” of the end times described in Revelation is the “reward of the triumphant church, *or the blessedness of their state*.”¹⁹ The biblical similitudes in the book of Revelation, reasons Edwards, whether kingdom, treasure, city, garden of pleasure and paradise, light, feast, robes, or the river of pleasure, represent the “blessedness,” or “happiness of the saints,” at the consummation of history.

Edwards’s main doctrinal heading, “That none are sufficient to represent to us, or to give us an idea of, the glories of the blessed,” divides into two sections. The first explains, “what natural reason evidences in this matter,” and the second, what the “Holy Scriptures” teach. The first of seven points of “natural reason” reads, “Natural reason tells us this, that God created man for nothing else but happiness”:

He created him only that he might communicate happiness to him. And therefore the happiness that God designed him for must be exceedingly great....Let it not be an objection to this, that God created man chiefly for his own glory. I answer, this is not different: for he created them that he might glorify himself this way, by making them blessed, and communicate his goodness to them.²⁰

Edwards’s first point, therefore, is that God created humanity “only that he might communicate happiness to him,” and as we have suggested, the Reformed subordination of happiness relative to God’s glory is at the forefront of Edwards’s mind: “Let it not be an objection to this, that God created man chiefly for his own glory.”²¹

Thus, Edwards explicitly pushes back against this dominant tendency of his own tradition to oppose or subordinate human happiness in the teleological scheme, which indicates that Edwards’s project aims to rescue and defend

¹⁸ Ibid, 139.

¹⁹ Ibid, 138 (emphasis added).

²⁰ Ibid, 146.

²¹ Ibid.

happiness, rather than the divine glory as most scholars assume. Edwards's teleology of happiness certainly does not exclude the comparably high teleological status of the glory of God, as he writes, "he created them that he might glorify himself this way, by making them blessed," or "communicate happiness to them."²² Edwards equates the glory of God *ad extra* with blessing the creature with happiness, which represents the same basic teleology of his mature articulation in *End of Creation*. Edwards never flounders with a myopic and unorthodox teleology of happiness that excludes God's glory, as several scholars suggest, and my point is that, notwithstanding the reconciliation of these telic purposes of God, what Edwards is manifestly and preeminently concerned with, the "main thing" Edwards means to demonstrate and defend, is the notion that human beings are created for happiness. As he writes, let not a high view of the glory of God as the "chief" end of creation "be an objection to this." A high teleological view of *happiness* is the idea Edwards perceives to be slipping away from Reformed divinity (and Enlightenment ethics), and his primary purpose and motivation is to defend the teleological vision that "God designed" human beings for "exceedingly great" happiness.

Second, Edwards argues, "Reason tells us that man was created to be happy in the beholding of God's own excellency,"²³ which represents the fruit of his recent essay, "Excellency" and notebook entry, Misc. 87. Third, he writes, "Reason tells us that man was created to be happy in the enjoyment of God's love,"²⁴ which reflects the work of Misc. 94, "Trinity," and subsequent notebook entries on the Spirit. Fourth, Edwards argues that "man's highest happiness" in God is "beyond all earthly pleasures,"²⁵ which reminds us of Edwards's profound and convincing early experience of the beatific enjoyment of God. Edwards's sixth point declares, "God has made man capable of exceeding great happiness, which he doubtless did not in vain." God did not give the creature a "nature

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid, 147.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid, 148.

capable of” knowing and loving, and even possessing and enjoying God, who is the “best good, and fountain of all felicity,” without intending to fulfill it.²⁶

Similarly, Edwards reasons, “It appears that man was intended for very great blessedness, inasmuch as God has created man with an earnest desire of very great felicity.”²⁷ Clearly, Edwards’s reflections on the Trinity begin to both inform his conception of happiness and demonstrate the Triune God as the source of all happiness, as I have previously discussed. Edwards concludes this section with great force of conviction, explicitly revealing his agenda to defend happiness against the notion that it might seem “seem incredible to us”:

Thus you see how reasonable what the Scripture has brought to light concerning the happiness of the saints is in itself, that mere reason evidences so much about; *so that there is no reason that it should seem incredible to us*, that ever man should be the subject of so great, so exceeding great happiness, as the Scripture represents.²⁸

Edwards is, evidently, aware of sceptics in Puritan New England regarding his thesis about happiness as ultimate *telos*, which is, recall, likely due to the influence of William Ames, as Edwards asserts, “there is no reason that it should seem incredible to us, that ever man should be the subject of so great, so exceeding great happiness...” Indeed, my thesis is that Edwards meant to defend happiness as *telos*, as he perceives real opposition to the idea by some who find it, “incredible.” During the previous year, Edwards responds to and counters the rival Enlightenment teleology of practical virtue and the common good, but during this stage, Edwards particularly grapples with the equally ‘unbelieving’ Puritan and Reformed context, which tends to shun or subordinate the teleological status of happiness relative to the glory of God.

In the second part of the sermon, Edwards describes what the Scriptures teach about the great happiness that is God’s end of creation, which derive primarily from familiar soteriological themes related to Christ and the work of

²⁶ Ibid, 151.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid, 152 (emphasis added).

redemption. Edwards's first observation is that believers "shall enjoy God as their own portion, and shall fully enjoy the possession of all things," adding, "The infinite God gives himself to them to be enjoyed as much as to the full of their capacity."²⁹ Believers, writes Edwards, will attain this beatific enjoyment of God, "Because they shall see God face to face, and enjoy God as his own dear children,"³⁰ which reflects Edwards's conversion experience, early sermons and Trinitarian model of happiness. Next, Edwards observes that the Scriptures say, "They shall be like God," and since "God is the first excellency and happiness...what greater happiness can there be for a creature, than to be like to this Being?" The work of Christ is subsequently considered, as God's love in the gospel necessarily implies the enjoyment of a happiness, "quite beyond all representation." Edwards's last point is that union with Christ, achieved by the work of redemption, enables the saints to "partake" of God's happiness.³¹

Edwards's extensive re-preaching notes include an entirely new text (1 John 3:2, "And it doth not yet appear what we shall be") and doctrine ("The godly are designed for unknown and inconceivable happiness"). Thus, the updated version of this sermon is even more focused on happiness as ultimate *telos*. These notes jettison the discussion of the biblical similitudes of Revelation 21, but retain the original doctrinal section about happiness as ultimate *telos*, Edwards's primary concern. The first doctrinal point based on the new text is particularly focused on defending his teleology of happiness: "We shall prove that the godly are designed for exceeding great happiness"³² Edwards's introductory arguments are identical to those in the Scriptural section of the original, highlighting possessing God, the beatific enjoyment of God, and likeness to God, who is "the first excellency and happiness." The first main section of the revision represents Edwards's proof for happiness as ultimate *telos*: "I. We shall prove that the godly are designed for exceeding great

²⁹ Ibid, 154.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid, 155.

³² Ibid, 145, n. 7.

happiness and most exalted glory.” Herein Edwards repeats the basic content of Misc. 87, explaining that since God’s motive to create was his own goodness, or his inclination to communicate his happiness, God necessarily made the creature for this very end. Lastly, Edwards once again addresses the ‘happiness skeptics’:

If it be objected against this, that God created the world ultimately for his own glory, this is so far from making against what we say, that it makes it more clear and evident. 'Tis undoubtedly true that God created all things for his own glory, but not for his essential glory but only his manifestative glory. But let us consider wherein this glory of God, that is the end of the creation, consists....the essence of glorifying of God consists, therefore, in the creature's rejoicing in God's manifestation of his beauty, which is the joy and happiness we speak of.³³

Clearly Edwards is aware of objectors to his teleology of happiness, who want to ascribe teleological exclusivity to the manifest glory of God *ad extra*. Edwards dispels any notion of teleological dichotomy, arguing that God’s glory stands not against human happiness, as it *consists in* “the joy and happiness” of the creature, which, according to Edwards, makes happiness as ultimate *telos* all the “more clear and evident.”

Nothing on Earth can Represent the Glories of Heaven represents a sermon concatenation of the several strands of Edwards’s early argument for happiness as ultimate *telos*. The sermon is evidence that Edwards’s teleology derives not only from deeply held philosophical and theological beliefs, but also from biblical convictions, as Edwards integrates biblical exegesis and the redemptive historical perspective for the sake of defending his Reformed teleology of happiness. Furthermore, this sermon reveals Edwards’s ongoing effort throughout the 1720s to defend happiness from teleological subordination relative to God’s glory in the Reformed context, as he concludes:

So we see it comes to this at last: that the end of the creation is that God may communicate happiness to the creature; for if God created the world that he might be glorified in the creature, he created it that they might

³³ Ibid, 161, n. 7.

rejoice in his glory: for we have shown they are the same. But if God created us to rejoice in his perfections, he made us to be happy in the seeing God's perfections, and rejoicing in them consists [in] the creature's glorifying of God; and the seeing God's perfections and rejoicing in them is the creature's highest happiness, and is that very happiness spoken of in the scripture, called seeing God's face [Revelation 22:4].³⁴

Edwards's primary agenda is to defend happiness as ultimate *telos*, as he writes, "So we see it comes to this at last: that the end of the creation is that God may communicate happiness to the creature," which is the teleology of happiness Edwards continues to fortify through his writings on redemption and the work of Christ throughout the 1720s and 1730s.

4.3 The Happiness of the Fall and Hell

Another aspect of the redemption story and Reformed doctrine that Edwards grapples with for the sake of his teleology of happiness is that of evil, the fall, and hell, which might understandably be perceived as a hindrance to such a teleology. While Edwards does not during this time address the issue of theodicy *per se*, he nevertheless demonstrates an effort to comprehend the misery of sin, the fall, and hell in light of God's great end to communicate happiness to the creature. Thus, Edwards appears to tackle this difficult aspect of the biblical redemption story for the sake of reconciling it with his teleology of happiness.

In Misc. 279, "Eternity of Hell Torments," written in the summer of 1727, Edwards defends the eternal misery of the reprobate *on the basis of the happiness of the elect*:

I am convinced that hell torments will be eternal from one great good the wisdom of God proposes by them, which is, by the sight of them to exalt the happiness, the love, and joyful thanksgivings of the angels and men that are saved....I am ready to think that the beholding the sight of the great miseries...will double the ardor of their love, and the fullness of the joy...will make them prize his favor and love exceedingly the more...that

³⁴ Ibid.

he chose them out from the rest to make them thus happy...only a lively sense of the opposite misery makes any happiness and pleasure double what it would be.³⁵

While the experiential realisation of happiness in Edwards's teleology is not universal, it is no less ultimate. Even the eternal misery of hell is a means to the great happiness of heaven.³⁶ The difficult details of the plan of redemption, even the eternal misery of the reprobate, are no hindrance to Edwards's teleology. Each and every aspect of the redemptive story serves to "exalt the happiness" of God's people, even the misery of hell. Edwards does not justify the eternal misery of the reprobate on the basis of the eternal display of God's justice or glory, as might traditionally be the case, but rather, on the basis of the enhancement of the eternal happiness of the saints, which he is determined to defend as ultimate *telos*.

Relatedly, Edwards considers the fall of Satan, which he likewise interprets as a means to the greater happiness of God's people. "Mankind," writes Edwards in Misc. 320 during early 1728 "are by occasion of them (Satan and the rebellious angels) advanced to higher glory and honor and greater happiness, and more united to God." This is due to the fact that God ultimately responds to the fall of Satan with incarnation of the Son and his work of redemption, by which the creature becomes "more united" to God and thus, happier, partaking of God's very own excellency and happiness.³⁷ Edwards continues to develop this line of thinking during the fall of 1728 in Misc. 344, "Satan Defeated," wherein he describes Satan's plans for misery as turned by God for the great happiness God "intended":

³⁵ Edwards, Misc. 279, *WJE* 13, 379.

³⁶ Sebastian Rehnman argues that Edwards's theodicy is not mere "consequentialism," as "there is something about the communication of divine fullness itself, apart from outweighing good consequences, that is determinative of its moral goodness." Sebastian Rehnman, "An Edwardsian Theodicy," in *Scholasticism Reformed*, 318-19. However, Edwards at this stage consistently argues that the "one great good" that God "proposes" by the eternal miseries of hell is the (consequential) enhancement of the happiness of those "that are saved." Edwards, Misc. 279, *WJE* 13, 379.

³⁷ Edwards, Misc. 320, *WJE* 13, 402.

His (Satan's) inferior end was to gratify his envy in the misery of mankind; but this was disappointed, in that what he has done has been an occasion of a far more exalted degree of happiness to the elect of mankind, to all that God intended happiness to in the creation.³⁸

"The misery of the damned," Edwards writes, "contributes exceedingly to the happiness of elect men and angels and to the glory of heaven":

...so that part of the world which God loved and designed happiness to when he made the world, are abundantly more happy for it."³⁹

Like Misc. 279, this entry establishes the positive relationship between the misery of hell and the happiness of the saints. God's design was for the "misery of the damned" to contribute to the greater happiness of God's people.

Similarly, in Misc. 348, "Decrees," Edwards argues that the communication of happiness for which God made the world would be imperfect apart from the existence and knowledge of evil:

And as it [is] necessary that there should be evil, because the glory of God could not but be imperfect and incomplete without it, so it is necessary in order to the happiness of the creature, in order to that completeness of that communication of God for which he made the world; because the creature's happiness consists in the knowledge of God and the sense of his love, and if the knowledge of him be imperfect, the happiness must be proportionably imperfect. And the happiness would also be imperfect upon another account, the sense of good is comparatively dull and flat without the knowledge of evil.⁴⁰

The existence of evil is justified, therefore, due to the fact that "it is necessary in order to the happiness of the creature, in order to that completeness of that communication of God for which he made the world."⁴¹ Thus, Edwards's teleology of happiness interprets his doctrine of evil, as evil is necessary to complete the picture of God's glory, the object and source of the creature's happiness, which would be imperfect apart from the existence of evil. Thus, evil

³⁸ Edwards, Misc. 344, *WJE* 13, 417.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 418.

⁴⁰ Edwards, Misc. 348, *WJE* 13, 420.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

is justified as necessary to the perfect communication of happiness to God's people "for which he made the world."

Therefore, Edwards's teleology of happiness remains at the forefront of his mind as he considers difficult aspects of the redemption narrative, such as the fall, evil, and the misery of hell, which are deemed as means to the great and perfect happiness for which God made and redeemed the world. Reconciling these traditional doctrines with his teleology of happiness is vital to establishing Edwards's teleological vision within a biblical and Reformed framework.

4.4 The Happiness of the Spirit Purchased by Christ

During the latter half of 1728 and first half of 1729, Edwards works to integrate redemptive historical themes with his teleology and doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Edwards develops two redemptive historical arguments to explain the centrality of the Holy Spirit in his teleology. The first deals with the "happiness of heaven," and the second, the Spirit as the source of the believer's happiness explained in terms of Christ's "purchase" of happiness.

First, the "happiness of heaven" is, in redemptive historical terms, the ultimate *telos* of Edwards's vision. However, he has yet to reconcile this eschatological view with his Trinitarian teleological framework, particularly the centrality of the happiness of the indwelling Holy Spirit, which is addressed in Misc. 364, "Trinity":

That the Spirit of God is spiritual joy and delight, is confirmed by those places where we are told that the Holy Spirit is the "earnest" of our future inheritance [Eph. 1:14] and the "first-fruits" (Rom. 8:23). The earnest is a part of the inheritance; which shows that our future inheritance, that happiness spoken of that God will give his saints, is nothing but a fullness of his Spirit.⁴²

Since the "future inheritance" is, from Edwards's perspective, "happiness," the Holy Spirit, the "earnest" of that inheritance, is the believer's "spiritual joy and

⁴² Edwards, Misc. 364, *WJE* 13, 436.

delight,” and the “future inheritance” of great happiness “is nothing but a fullness of his Spirit.” Thus, Edwards fortifies the basic Trinitarian framework of his teleology of happiness, particularly the notion of the Spirit as the source of happiness, with the biblical and redemptive historical notion of the “future inheritance.”

Three entries later in Misc. 367, Edwards defends the notion that “Christ by his righteousness purchased for everyone perfect happiness.”⁴³ Edwards’s doctrine of redemption, thus, supports his teleology of happiness, as happiness is the purchase of redemption. Entertaining the theoretical objection, ‘Is not redemption the purchase of *eternal life*?’, Edwards answers, Christ “purchased eternal life, that is, perfect happiness, or which is the same thing.”⁴⁴ Edwards, therefore, defines not only redemption, but also “eternal life” in terms of happiness. For Edwards, happiness is the ultimate *telos* of the redemption story. Then, on the basis of this doctrine of redemption, Edwards integrates his pneumatological and Christocentric perspectives for the sake of his teleology of happiness in Misc. 402, “Work of Redemption. Wisdom of God in Redemption. Spirit of God,” written in the spring of 1729. Having just recently declared, “Christ by his righteousness purchased for everyone perfect happiness” in Misc. 367, Edwards, in Misc. 402 reconciles this notion with his doctrine of the happiness of the Spirit, by explaining that Christ’s purchase of happiness is his purchase of the Holy Spirit:

The sum of all that Christ purchased is the Holy Ghost. God is he of whom the purchase is made, God is the purchase and the price, and God is the thing purchased: God is the Alpha and the Omega in this work.

Christ’s purchase of “grace and many spiritual blessings,” writes Edwards, is in fact the “indwelling of the Holy Ghost,” even to eternal life, “that we should be perfect in holiness and happiness; which is still comprised in that, in having the

⁴³ Edwards, Misc. 367, *WJE* 13, 437.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

indwelling of the Holy Ghost.”⁴⁵ In other words, Christ purchases happiness by purchasing the Holy Spirit, who is the happiness of God. Thus, Edwards integrates his redemptive historical perspective focused on Christ and his saving work with his basic Trinitarian teleological framework in order to establish a Reformed teleology of happiness that is biblically grounded from a redemptive historical perspective. In these notebook entries and throughout the 1720s, Edwards builds on the basic foundation of his teleology of happiness. The first conceptual layer is the communicative goodness of God, and the second, the Triune happiness of God and his Spirit. The third layer is represented by the redemptive historical context of the biblical narrative, which is obviously crucial to strengthening Edwards’s convictions, and vital to a comprehensive defense of his Reformed teleology of happiness.

4.5 Justification and the Gift of Happiness

During the late-1720s, Edwards is observed defining the doctrine of justification in terms of happiness, which fortifies his Reformed teleological framework with a Christocentric soteriology rooted in the redemption story. As Sang Lee writes, “Edwards integrated the justification doctrine and its forensic language into his larger theological vision.”⁴⁶ This integration is particularly manifest within the context of Edwards’s teleology of happiness. Of course the Reformed doctrine of justification is associated with forensic status rather than an ontological state, however for Edwards, justification represents the primary soteriological means by which a perfect happiness can be granted to the creature. As Edwards writes in Misc. 367, “Christ by his righteousness purchased for everyone perfect happiness; that is, he merited that their capacity should be filled with happiness...all their happiness be the fruit of Christ’s purchase.”⁴⁷ Thus, Edwards’s doctrines of justification and redemption explain

⁴⁵ Edwards, Misc. 402, *WJE* 13, 466.

⁴⁶ Lee, “Editor’s Introduction,” *WJE* 21, 105.

⁴⁷ Edwards, Misc. 367, *WJE* 13, 437.

God's communication of happiness as ultimate *telos* from a soteriological and redemptive historical perspective capable of satisfying the requirements of the Reformed tradition.

Accordingly, faith, or "trust" in Christ, through which the sinner receives Christ's righteousness and justification, is the subjective path to happiness, rather than practical righteousness or usefulness toward the common good. Edwards is clear in Misc. 862, "Humiliation," written in 1740, that happiness is attained solely through trusting in the righteousness of Christ:

As wicked men trust in their own righteousness for salvation, so they trust in the world for happiness; and therefore, their being brought off from a worldly happiness is as necessary, in order to their looking to Christ as the only medium of happiness...⁴⁸

Happiness comes through Christ and his gift of righteousness, therefore, Christ is "the only medium of happiness." This phrase originates in Edwards's early reflections on the "work of redemption" during the early 1730s:

Agreeable to this, it was so ordered that Christ should be the great means of bringing the world from heathenism, to the knowledge of the true God and the true religion.... *Therefore is Christ the grand medium of all communications of grace and happiness from God*, by which especially God glorifies himself. Christ has this honor, that the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hands.⁴⁹

Edwards elaborates on this idea in Misc. 862 when he writes that for an "interest in Christ," we must go through "humiliation...weaned from Adam's earthly happiness" and "Adam's way of obtaining his happiness, viz. his own righteousness."⁵⁰ The "happiness" that accords with Christ's righteousness is, according to Edwards, the "grand secret" of true Christianity:

In these things, viz. in renouncing the world to trust in Christ only as the means and fountain of our happiness, and in renouncing our own

⁴⁸ Edwards, Misc. 862, *WJE* 20, 86.

⁴⁹ Edwards, Misc. 526, *WJE* 18, 70 (emphasis added).

⁵⁰ Edwards, Misc. 862, *WJE* 20, 90.

righteousness to trust alone in his righteousness, lies the grand secret of being thorough Christians.⁵¹

Edwards writes a series of entries in 1741, each with the title, “Justification,” that argue that the believer’s happiness is the fruit of Christ’s saving work, which further establishes Edwards’s teleology of happiness in Reformed soteriology and the redemption story. In Misc. 983, Edwards reflects on the phrase, “the righteousness of God in him” from Romans 10:4 and highlights two things. First, the phrase “shows the infinite value and excellency and merit of that righteousness, viz. that it was the righteousness of a divine person,” and secondly, “this shows our immediate and universal dependence on God for all our happiness, by the constitution of things in the covenant of grace.” According to Edwards, this intimate connection between justification and happiness “shows the exceeding HAPPINESS of the saints in glory” relative to the angels, as their happiness is based not on their own righteousness, but “the righteousness of God.” The saints are “brought nearer to God” and enjoy an exceedingly greater happiness, with “vastly higher degrees of union with him, and more excellent enjoyment of his love, even to a participation of the Father’s love to the Son.”⁵²

A similar argument for a ‘greater’ happiness on the basis of Christ’s righteousness can be found in Charnock. Christ and the work of redemption provide mankind with a greater righteousness and therefore, a greater happiness, than that of Adam, even in his innocence:

By this redemption God restores us to a more excellent condition than Adam had in innocence. Christ was sent by Divine goodness, not only to restore the life Adam’s sin had stripped us of, but to give it more abundantly than Adam’s standing could have conveyed it to us...*More abundantly for strength, more abundantly for duration, a life abounding with greater felicity and glory...* We are united to a more excellent Head than Adam: instead of a root merely human, we have a root Divine as well as human. In him we had the righteousness of a creature merely

⁵¹ Ibid, 90-91.

⁵² Edwards, Misc. 893, *WJE* 20, 152-53.

human; in this we have a righteousness divine, the righteousness of God-man.⁵³

As with Charnock, Edwards believes that God's goodness through the work of redemption, particularly the gift of righteousness in union with Christ, is central to God's plan to communicate a "greater felicity" to mankind. This redemptive historical framework defends Edwards's basic teleology as biblical and solidly Reformed. The gift of Christ's righteousness is the salvific means by which the creature comes into union with Christ and partakes of the great happiness of God's Spirit. These articulations of justification and the gift of Christ's righteousness demonstrate Edwards's particular agenda to demonstrate spiritual happiness as the goal of God's redemptive plan within a Reformed theological framework.

Edwards continues to emphasise the creature's dependence on the righteousness of Christ for happiness even into the 1750s, when shortly before the composition of *End of Creation*, he writes Misc. 1177, "Christ's Righteousness. Obedience," arguing, similarly to Charnock, that God's design in redemption is to bring mankind into a greater dependence on himself for happiness:

*But it was the will of God to bring mankind into a greater dependence on himself for happiness, and so that his righteousness, by which he should have a title to happiness, should not be the righteousness of an human but a divine person....and that the value of it that should render it prevalent to recommend us should not be the value of any human virtue or beauty in itself considered, but should arise from the infinite dignity of the divinity to which the man Christ Jesus was personally united.*⁵⁴

According to Edwards, and contrary to many Enlightenment thinkers, human happiness is in no way dependent on human virtue, rather, as with Charnock, human happiness is utterly dependent on Christ. Thus, the doctrine of justification and the gift of Christ's righteousness is explored throughout

⁵³ Charnock, *Existence and Attributes of God*, Vol. II, 291-92 (emphasis added).

⁵⁴ Edwards, Misc. 1177, *WJE* 23, 93-94.

Edwards's career for the sake of bolstering his Reformed teleology of happiness, which he seeks to fortify from a redemptive historical perspective.

4.6 The Happiness of the Work of Redemption

Edwards makes his most explicit use of the redemptive historical perspective for the sake of defending his teleology of happiness during the 1730s when he writes a series of notebook entries that will culminate in the sermon series delivered in 1739, *A History of the Work of Redemption*. During 1731-32, immediately after he completes the majority of his *Discourse on the Trinity*, Edwards transitions to explore the *means* of God's Trinitarian communication of happiness to the saints, namely, Christ and the work of redemption, the nature of which defends the notion of happiness as ultimate *telos*.

In Misc. 526, "Wisdom of God in the Work of Redemption," Edwards opens, "God made the world for his own glory. And Jesus Christ has this honor, to be the greatest instrument of glorifying God that ever was..." Yet, Edwards does not stop there: the person and work of Christ as the instrument of the glory of God is not the ultimate point of his short entry. Rather, Edwards describes and grounds the honor and glory of Christ in the following terms:

...it was so ordered that Christ should be the great means of bringing the world from heathenism, to the knowledge of the true God and the true religion....*Therefore is Christ the grand medium of all communications of grace and happiness from God, by which especially God glorifies himself.*⁵⁵

Edwards does not say that Christ is the "grand medium" of God's *glory*. Rather, *happiness* is the main point: Christ is the "grand medium of all communications of grace and happiness from God." Yes, "God glorifies himself" through Christ and the communication of happiness, however the emphasis is on the communication of happiness. Of course Edwards does not subordinate or

⁵⁵ Edwards, Misc. 526, *WJE* 18, 70.

exclude the divine glory, but Edwards continues to focus on defending the happiness of Christ's redeeming work, as he writes soon after, in Misc. 596:

...the gospel gives us a most rational account of a full recovery from our fallen state, *and obtaining our primitive happiness, and advancement to a much greater happiness by Jesus Christ.*⁵⁶

While the glory of God is always important to Edwards, he consistently explains in such a way as to articulate happiness as ultimate *telos*, his primary agenda.

Misc. 553, "End of the Creation," and Misc. 554, "The Wisdom of God in the Work of Redemption. Angels," also written during 1731-32, similarly demonstrate Edwards's concern for his teleology of happiness as he begins to seriously consider the "work of redemption." Immediately after arguing in Misc. 553 that "God's goodness and grace towards creatures" is the "end of the creation,"⁵⁷ Edwards writes, from the perspective of "the angels in heaven," in Misc. 554:

They could not [but] have their thoughts excited and set to work to the utmost, to think it (the work of redemption) could be. *Man must be happy*, and the object of that high favor of God, notwithstanding this fall; *for it was the decree of God*, and that they knew."⁵⁸

Edwards believes that God's "goodness and grace towards creatures," is necessary on the basis of "the decree of God," and not because God must be glorified, but because "man must be happy." Thus, when Edwards grapples with the redemption narrative, he continuously exposes his agenda to comprehend happiness as God's ultimate redemptive goal, which will explicitly serve the defense of his teleology of happiness.

4.6.1 Redemption Reveals Happiness as Ultimate *Telos*

By the mid-1730s Edwards increasingly focuses his attention on "the work of redemption," which reveals his agenda to defend happiness as a

⁵⁶ Edwards, Misc. 596, *WJE* 18, 130 (emphasis added).

⁵⁷ Edwards, Misc. 553, *WJE* 18, 97.

⁵⁸ Edwards, Misc. 554, *WJE* 18, 98 (emphasis added).

supreme end of the creation, in no way subordinate to the glory of God. Marsden claims that the local context is crucial to understanding Edwards's purpose during this time, suggesting that Edwards's redemptive historical writings are motivated by the Northampton revival of 1734-35 and "designed to introduce the Northamptonites to a sense of how they should understand their own history in the perspective of biblical history."⁵⁹ Ava Chamberlain follows suit, claiming that the emergence of the redemptive historical writings in Edwards's *Miscellanies* notebook is due to the Northampton revival, and the subsequent "backsliding" of Edwards's congregation.⁶⁰ While this revival theory should not be altogether dismissed, what this perspective fails to appreciate is that the "work of redemption" writings are an integral part of the development of larger Edwards's teleological project, which Edwards's important Misc. 702, "Work of Creation. Providence. Redemption." reveals.

Immediately following an entry titled, "Happiness of Heaven Increasing," wherein Edwards cites Thomas Ridgley's *Body of Divinity*, Edwards writes Misc. 702, which anticipates his 1739 sermon series, *The History of the Work of Redemption*. Wilson claims that Misc. 702, written during 1736-37, is "in many respects," a "précis of the argument of the Redemption Discourse."⁶¹ In Misc. 702, Edwards's well-known thesis that creation itself and all of God's subsequent works of providence in history are subservient to "that grand design," the "work of redemption" is clearly articulated. "The work of redemption," writes Edwards, "may be looked upon as the great end and drift of all God's works and dispensations from the beginning, and even the end of the work of creation itself."⁶² What has been overlooked in this important notebook entry, however, is the way that Edwards explicitly utilises this redemptive historical thesis for the sake of defending the teleological status of *happiness*, as Edwards's first corollary states:

⁵⁹ Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 194.

⁶⁰ Ava Chamberlain, "Editor's Introduction," *WJE* 18, 42.

⁶¹ John F. Wilson, "Editor's Introduction," *WJE* 9, 15.

⁶² Edwards, Misc. 702, *WJE* 18, 284.

Corol. 1. Hence [it] is a great confirmation that God's communicating happiness to the creature stands in the place of a supreme end, because we see that that work, even the making the creature happy by redemption, is the end of all God's other works. See Nos. 461, 445.⁶³

Edwards is evidently eager to conclude that if the work of redemption is the supreme end, God's communication of happiness to the creature is a supreme end – due to the fact that, as Edwards has been emphasising from the very beginning of his career, the goal of redemption is “making the creature happy by redemption.” Scholars tend to read Misc. 702 as a historical defense of God's glory or redemption as ultimate *telos*, as with Paul Ramsey, who writes, “No. 702 is a lengthy entry employing biblical typology to show “glory” and “redemption” to be God's end.”⁶⁴ Edwards's certainly does not ignore the *telos* of divine glory, however my argument is that what has been overlooked is the way that Misc. 702 explicitly serves the defense of Edwards's teleology of *happiness*. Edwards's redemptive historical work, which has continually and particularly highlighted the ultimate *telos* of creaturely happiness, is, similar to his doctrine of “Excellency,” and the Trinity, and the Holy Spirit, pursued by Edwards for the sake of demonstrating the supreme teleological status of happiness. This is the “great confirmation” Edwards has been seeking and which is explicitly established by Misc. 702.

Furthermore, the first corollary of Misc. 702 implies Edwards's intent to show that God's communication of happiness to the creature is not subordinate to God's glory in the teleological scheme. The evidence for this is Edwards's reference at the end of the corollary: “See Nos. 461, 445.”⁶⁵ Approximately seven years earlier, in 1729, Edwards had, in Misc. 445, “End of the Creation,” argued on the basis of the nature of God's goodness, that the communication of

⁶³ Ibid, 298.

⁶⁴ Ramsey, *WJE* 8, 504, n. 3. See also Zakai, *Jonathan Edwards's Philosophy of History*, 21: “History, then, is a sacred space of time destined from eternity for God's *self-glorification* – the display of the Deity's excellence in creation – as evidenced in his work of redemption.”

⁶⁵ Edwards, Misc. 702, *WJE* 18, 284.

happiness to the creature “is not merely a subordinate end but stands in the place of an ultimate end.”⁶⁶ Defending against the subordination of happiness is also central to Misc. 461, “End of the Creation”:

See Nos. 445, 702 (corol. 1). If God delights in the creatures' participation of his happiness for its own sake, then it is evident that the communication of good is not merely a subordinate end, but must be allowed the place of an ultimate end; for if it be for its own sake, then it is not wholly for the sake of something else as its end. But 'tis evident that God delights in goodness for its own sake...⁶⁷

Since God does not delight in goodness, i.e. the “creature’s participation of his happiness,” for the sake of something greater, this communication of goodness and happiness is not for the sake of, or as a means to, anything greater. Thus, God’s “communication of good” (the happiness of the creature) is “not merely a subordinate end, but must be allowed the place of an ultimate end.” Therefore, from 1729 through 1737, Edwards has held this purpose in mind, the demonstration of happiness as an ultimate end, in no way subordinate to God’s glory: first, on the basis of the goodness of God (Misc. 445); next, in relation to the happiness of God (Misc. 461); and then, on the basis of God’s work of redemption (Misc. 702). This reveals that the subordination of happiness in the Reformed context is crucial, making Edwards’s purpose to *defend* happiness, as my thesis suggests, all the more plausible. Most scholars, as we have already discussed, argue that an anthropocentric Enlightenment is the primary context for understanding Edwards’s “end of creation” project, claiming that Edwards’s first concern is a theocentric defense of the glory of God. The story that has been overlooked, perhaps ironically, is that Edwards, throughout his career, is supremely interested in the defense of creaturely happiness as ultimate *telos* in the face of an ‘overly’ theocentric Reformed tradition.

The value and legitimacy of the Reformed context I am highlighting is furthermore supported by two influential Reformed works discussed earlier in

⁶⁶ Edwards, Misc. 445, *WJE* 13, 493.

⁶⁷ Edwards, Misc. 461, *WJE* 13, 502.

Chapter 2 that explicitly subordinate human happiness relative to God's glory, which are both published and studied by Edwards within the decade prior to Misc. 702. In fact, Edwards is studying Thomas Ridgley's exposition of the Westminster Assembly's Larger Catechism, *A Body of Divinity* (1731-33) during the precise time he writes Misc. 702, citing him, as mentioned above, in Edwards's preceding notebook entry about happiness. Recall that Ridgley's interpretation of the Westminster Catechism subordinates happiness as "a means leading to" the glory of God.⁶⁸ Massachusetts's Samuel Willard's massive work on the Westminster Catechism, his influential *Compleat Body* (1726), which Edwards owned, also explains happiness in a subordinate manner: "Man was made for an end, viz. to glorify God; and in subordination thereto, to seek and obtain blessedness."⁶⁹ Therefore, it is more than reasonable to suggest that Edwards's writings on this subject are motivated by these publications, which represent evidence of a strong tendency in the Reformed tradition to subordinate happiness.

Interpretations of Edwards's philosophy of history tend to read the "work of redemption" project solely in terms of the Enlightenment context and have failed to see the way that this project contributes to his teleology of happiness within the Reformed theological context. Scholars of Edwards's history project, such as Zakai and Chamberlain, rightly demonstrate his counter-Enlightenment view of history⁷⁰ and "anti-deist orientation,"⁷¹ yet there is little evidence that Edwards had these things particularly in mind. It does not appear by the texts or internal context that Edwards's work on the history of redemption is motivated by a desire to explain history in terms of divine sovereignty and the plan of redemption over and against a humanistic Enlightenment historiography. Neither does it appear from the texts that Edwards is particularly motivated to

⁶⁸ Ridgley, *Body of Divinity*, Vol. I, 13.

⁶⁹ Willard, quoted by Lowrie, *Shape of the Puritan Mind*, 96.

⁷⁰ Zakai, *Jonathan Edwards's Philosophy of History*, 21.

⁷¹ Chamberlain, "Editor's Introduction," *WJE* 18, 30.

explain the primacy of the glory of God. Rather, the texts reveal that the entire development of his redemptive historical writings during the 1720s and 1730s are primarily utilised and shaped by a motivation and purpose to defend his teleology of happiness within the Reformed context. Thus, I am suggesting that Edwards's primary purpose in the redemption writings, is to defend, not a historiography, nor the glory of God, nor even the Christian faith *per se*, but rather a teleology – of happiness. As Edwards writes in Misc. 702, “is a great confirmation,” that God, “making the creature happy by redemption” is the supreme “end of all God’s other works.”

Furthermore, Edwards's efforts to explain the work of redemption in terms of happiness for the sake of bolstering his teleology is revealed in several other places within Misc. 702. Reflecting on God's use of nature and the incarnation of the Son of God, Edwards writes:

The God of nature never so put himself out of the way in any wise to use nature to accomplish anything else as the work of redemption, or to obtain any other end, as the happiness of his elect, by redemption. And therefore, we may conclude that it was made and established chiefly for this end.⁷²

The guiding purpose of all of God's works of providence, and therefore the “end” of the natural created order itself, is to “obtain” the “happiness of the elect.” In short, the *telos* of the universe is the happiness of God's people, achieved by the work of redemption. Similarly, Edwards argues for happiness as ultimate *telos* on the basis of the sovereign lordship of Christ, who is “made head over all things,” which is “another argument that redemption is the work to which all things are subordinate,” concluding:

*'Tis an evidence that all things are for the sake of the happiness of the saints, which they have by redemption, that all things are put under the Redeemer of the saints.*⁷³

⁷² Edwards, Misc. 702, *WJE* 18, 291.

⁷³ *Ibid*, 294 (emphasis added).

Since, according to Edwards, the ultimate goal of the Redeemer is the happiness of the saints, the fact that he is sovereign over “all things” means that “all things are for the sake of the happiness of the saints.” Furthermore, echoing his early sermon, *The Value of Salvation*, he soon after writes:

’Tis a further evidence that all things are subordinate to the redemption and happiness of the saints, that not [only] is their Redeemer set over all things, but they are set over all things and shall reign over all things in and with him.⁷⁴

Thus, the present and future supremely advantageous position of the saints, which is the result of the work of redemption, means that happiness is the ultimate *telos* of “all things.” Edwards also reflects on the gift of salvation and happiness to sinners:

’Tis an evidence that the work of redemption and the making happy sinful men in Christ, is that for which all things are done and to which all things are ultimately directed, that the consummation of all things is committed into the hands of Christ as Redeemer....*this is a plain intimation that the happiness of him whose Redeemer he is, is the end of all things...*⁷⁵

The sovereignty of God, the lordship of Christ, and the work of redemption are not the main point of Edwards’s series of arguments, rather, *happiness* is, happiness as ultimate *telos*, “the end of all things.” Edwards’s overwhelming attention to happiness as ultimate *telos*, especially when we consider the internal and external contexts, is a solid indication that Edwards’s primary purpose in this foundational *Miscellanies* entry about “the work of redemption” is to bolster his Reformed teleology of happiness from the redemptive historical perspective. The end of “all things” is *happiness* for the redeemed. All of creation, all providence, all of redemptive history, and therefore, all of history, is directed toward the happiness of God’s people. “’Tis but one work,” writes Edwards, “making them happy in himself through Christ”:

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 295 (emphasis added).

'Tis all one scheme, one contrivance; and that is the scheme, contrivance and work of glorifying himself and his Son Jesus Christ, and gathering and uniting his creatures to himself, and making them happy in himself through Christ God-man by means of that glorious redemption that he has wrought out.⁷⁶

Edwards concludes Misc. 702 by stating that the “the glory and happiness” of redemption will “immensely exceed the happiness that man was possessed of before the fall,” due to the fact that “this happiness of man by redemption is the great end of all things, the end of the work of creation...”⁷⁷

Based largely on Edwards’s well known comments to the College of New Jersey trustees near the end of his career in the 1750s that he planned to write a theology of the Christian faith “in an entire new method, being thrown into the form of a history,”⁷⁸ scholars have tended to read Misc. 702 as the genesis of a project aimed at exploring a new historical theological method or establishing a uniquely Christian historiography. Zakai represents this consensus, arguing that the primary achievement and significance of Misc. 702 is Edwards’s *Heilsgeschichte* historiography:

Edwards toiled throughout the 1730s to define the meaning of God’s work of redemption...In 1736, he came to the conclusion that the work of redemption constituted the “great end and drift of all God’s works,” which led to his attempt to explain the work of redemption as part of the fabric of the entire creation, and to claim that it constituted the essential dynamism behind the teleology of sacred order inherent in the structure of the universe,” even as Edwards says, “the end of the work of creation it self.”⁷⁹

Certainly, what Zakai claims is not untrue, but I would suggest it does not go far enough. Wilson also ignores Edwards’s emphasis on happiness, however his insight is correct that for Edwards, redemptive history derives its meaning from the “end of creation” project. “History,” writes Wilson, “functions as the

⁷⁶ Ibid, 296.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 309.

⁷⁸ Edwards, *WJE* 16, 727.

⁷⁹ Zakai, *Jonathan Edwards’s Philosophy of History*, 21.

“metaphysical medium” in which meaning is displayed.”⁸⁰ The “meaning” of redemption history, and thus all of history, does indeed derive from Edwards’s teleology – of happiness. In spite of Edwards’s clear emphasis on happiness in Misc. 702, Zakai never mentions it. This is likely due to the fact that, as we have discussed, Zakai reads Edwards’s theological project as a defense of the sovereignty and glory of God against the backdrop of an anthropocentric Enlightenment. Zakai has also missed the internal and external matters of context that highlight Edwards’s multidisciplinary teleological development aimed at defending happiness as ultimate *telos* during the 1720s and 1730s (as has Wilson). Edwards indeed “toiled throughout the 1730s to define the meaning of God’s work of redemption,” and my suggestion is that, that meaning is the “great confirmation” Edwards’s himself describes, that the “*happiness* of man by redemption is the great end of all things, the end of the work of creation...”⁸¹ The ultimate emphasis of Misc. 702 is not historiography, but rather teleology, for the sake of establishing happiness as ultimate *telos*.

Perhaps another reason the scholarship overlooks happiness in Edwards’s “work of redemption” writings is the influence of Paul Ramsey, who has promoted the idea that Edwards begins to deemphasize the language of happiness in the 1730s with Misc. 702 and some subsequent redemptive historical writings. Ramsey argues that Misc. 702 and Misc. 1081 represent a shift toward articulating God’s goodness and communication of happiness in terms of “mercy” and the language of “redemption.”⁸² Ramsey describes the transition:

Brief consideration of the substance of these interlocking references shows JE’s move, folding the communication of God’s goodness or happiness into “for his mercies sake,” actually in process, and his defining “good” to the creature by redemption.⁸³

⁸⁰ Wilson, “History,” 216.

⁸¹ Edwards, Misc. 702, *WJE* 18, 309.

⁸² Paul Ramsey, “Editor’s Introduction,” *WJE* 8, 506, n. 6.

⁸³ *Ibid*, 507, n. 6.

Ramsey gives the impression that Edwards has matured and discovered better, “more biblical,” language to replace the old, as he writes a few notes later, it “illustrates what I have called the “folding” or assumption” of terms and concepts, without loss, into more biblical ones.”⁸⁴ What Ramsey misses, however, is that Edwards is not looking for concepts “more biblical” than happiness, rather, he is looking to defend the concept of happiness as ultimate *telos* as biblical, in redemptive historical terms. “Mercy,” according to Edwards and Reformed divines, is, as we have already observed with Turretin, a form of God’s goodness (in relation to a helpless and sinful creature). Therefore, from Edwards’s perspective, that God’s works of redemption are “for his (God’s) mercies’ sake,” *proves from the Scriptures* that redemption is for the sake of God’s goodness and communicating happiness to the creature.

Rather than replacing the terms goodness and happiness, Edwards is defending his use (and the teleological import) of these terms, especially happiness, as the title of Misc. 1081, which Ramsey references, suggests: “Texts that seem to show that the communication of God’s goodness and HAPPINESS is the END OF THE CREATION.”⁸⁵ Therefore, while the most influential commentators have overlooked the centrality of happiness in Edwards’s historical writings, I am suggesting that the primary purpose of Misc. 701, and several other “work of redemption” texts from the 1730s and 1740s, is to bolster and defend Edwards’s teleology of happiness, thereby demonstrating that happiness is not subordinate to God’s glory in the Reformed teleological vision.

4.6.2 *A Psalm of Redemption and Happiness*

In 1736, the same year that he writes Misc. 702, Edwards studies Psalm 136, the fruit of which produces two texts that reveal Edwards’s keen interest in demonstrating happiness as ultimate *telos* from the redemptive historical

⁸⁴ Ibid, 510, n. 5.

⁸⁵ Edwards, Misc. 1081, *WJE* 20, 465.

perspective, a Thanksgiving sermon and a “Blank Bible” note. Like Misc. 702, these works defend the notion that happiness is not a subordinate, but rather, an ultimate end of creation and redemption. Edwards’s very brief entry on Psalm 136 in the “Blank Bible” reads:

This psalm confirms me that an ultimate end of the creation of the world and of all God's works is his goodness, or the communication of his good, to his creatures. For this psalm sufficiently teaches that all God's works, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, are works of mercy to his people, yea, even the works of his vindictive justice and wrath.⁸⁶

Since all of God’s works are “mercy to his people,” reasons Edwards, the communication of God’s goodness, i.e. happiness, is an “ultimate end of the creation of the world.” The Thanksgiving sermon on Psalm 136 repeats this same conviction: “That all [the] great works of God from the beginning of the [world] to the end of it are works of mercy to his people,” which leads Edwards to proclaim that all of God’s works of love and mercy, “’tis all for their happiness.” As in Misc. 702, Edwards writes, it “is a plain intimation that the happiness of the saints whose redeemer and head Christ is, is the end of all things,” and in conclusion:

Hence we may see that the works of redemption must needs be [the] greatest of all God’s works, because we see by this doc[trine] that *all other works are subordinated to it in that they are subordinated to the good and happiness of the redeemed.*⁸⁷

Thus, Edwards supports (and proclaims) his teleology of happiness with the redemptive historical perspective of Psalm 136. Certainly the Northampton revival leaves an impression on Edwards, but his focus on the work of redemption, as revealed by multiple notebooks and his preaching, appears to be primarily motivated by his longstanding concern to articulate a Reformed teleology of happiness.

⁸⁶ Edwards, “Blank Bible,” *WJE* 24, 537.

⁸⁷ Edwards, Sermon # 413, *Works of Jonathan Edwards Online*, Vol. 51.

4.6.3 Happiness as the Ultimate Telos of Redemption

The happiness of redemption history continues as a central focus for Edwards throughout the later 1730s leading up the 1739 sermon series, *A History of the Work of Redemption*. Several notebook entries demonstrate Edwards's intense concern for happiness as the ultimate *telos* of redemption as he considers various aspects of God's work of salvation through Christ.

In 1738, as he approaches the major sermon series, Edwards makes the following connection between the incarnation and happiness in Misc. 744: "the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us...*that we might partake of his fullness and might be made happy by him and in him.*"⁸⁸ Likewise, he writes in Misc. 741:

He hath done this to the head of manhood to show forth what honor and happiness God designs for manhood, for the end of God's assuming this particular manhood, was the honor and happiness of the rest; surely therefore, we may well argue the greatness of the happiness of the rest from it.⁸⁹

The passion of Christ also argues for great happiness, as Edwards writes in Misc. 741, "the sufferings of Christ for believers":

...argues the greatness of intimacy with Christ, and the fullness of enjoyment of him, that believers shall have...He looked on his blood as theirs and so spilt it for them when it was needed for their happiness.⁹⁰

In other words, from Edwards's perspective, the nature and character of the work of redemption argues for great happiness:

God and Christ, who have begrutched nothing as too great to be done, too good to be given, as the means of the saints' enjoyment of happiness, won't begrutch anything in the enjoyment itself.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Edwards, Misc. 744, *WJE* 18, 385 (emphasis added).

⁸⁹ Edwards, Misc. 741, *WJE* 18, 368.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 369.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 371.

Edwards's appreciation for God's love displayed through Christ and the cross convinces him that the ultimate *telos* of the plan of redemption is great happiness and a "fullness of enjoyment."⁹² Union with Christ continues to provide Edwards with conviction about happiness as ultimate *telos*, observing in this same entry that "the way that God hath contrived to bring 'em to their happiness" is by uniting them to the Son, and therefore, the Father.⁹³ Thus, Edwards's development of thought in anticipation of the redemption sermon series reveals his particular motivation and purpose to explain happiness as the highest goal of redemption.

Edwards's discussion in Misc. 742, "Consummation of All Things," is likewise aimed at explaining happiness as the ultimate *telos* of redemption. According to Edwards, the "representative" headship of Christ will at the consummation transition to a "vital and conjugal head, or head of influence and enjoyment," which, "is more natural and essential to the main ends and purposes of his union with them":

That it should be thus is much more agreeable with *that supreme state of happiness and consummate enjoyment* of both the Father and the Son, which the saints shall be admitted to at the end of the world.⁹⁴

Edwards characterises the headship of Christ at the consummation of redemption history as commensurate with God's "main ends and purposes," particularly, "the supreme state of happiness and enjoyment." Edwards's redemptive historical perspective, informed in part by his doctrine of the Trinity and the infinite happiness of the Father and the Son, is again shown to serve his Reformed teleology of happiness.

Biblical descriptions of heaven also fortify Edwards's vision for happiness as ultimate *telos*, as with Misc. 743, "New Heavens and New Earth. Consummation of All Things. Heaven." Edwards argues that "heaven is

⁹² Ibid, 372.

⁹³ Ibid, 368.

⁹⁴ Edwards, Misc. 742, *WJE* 18, 374-75 (emphasis added).

everywhere in the New Testament spoken as....the place of blessedness, and all good...the appointed place of all that is holy and happy.”⁹⁵ In this entry, Edwards expresses his confidence in happiness as ultimate *telos* on the basis of the “confirmed immutable happiness” of the angels in heaven. His first corollary argues that since “the saints and angels are forever to be one society dwelling together as one company to all eternity,” it is fitting that “their greatest interests and those things that concern their everlasting happiness should be so linked together...” The second corollary states: “Here also we may observe that God’s work from the beginning of the universe to the end, and in all parts of the universe, appears to be but one.”⁹⁶ The happiness of heaven is, therefore, that which explains the unity of all of God’s works throughout history. Thus, from a myriad of perspectives on the work of redemption, Edwards works to bolster his teleological vision for happiness as the ultimate goal of redemption as he approaches the sermon series, *A History of the Work of Redemption*.

4.6.4 The Happiness of A History of the Work of Redemption

Edwards, admittedly, spends very little time discussing happiness as ultimate *telos* in *A History of the Work of Redemption*, which requires some explanation. While the primary content of the sermons rarely emphasises happiness, it is not insignificant that Edwards’s final conclusion makes absolutely central both the present happiness the saints, and the ultimate “blessed issue things shall finally be brought to”:

*Hence we learn how happy a society the church of Christ is: for all this great work is for them....We have seen what a blessed issue things shall finally be brought to as to them, and what a glory they shall arrive at, and remain in forever and ever...O happy people and blessed society: well may they spend an eternity in praises and halleluia to him who hath loved them from eternity, and love them to eternity.*⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Edwards, Misc. 743, *WJE* 18, 379.

⁹⁶ Edwards, Misc. 744, *WJE* 18, 387-89.

⁹⁷ Edwards, *A History of the Work of Redemption*, *WJE* 9, 526-27 (emphasis added).

Edwards's jubilant conclusion reveals the precise teleological conviction he has developed over the course of his career, stating that his thirty-sermon exposition of the entire history of redemption should preeminently convince his people of the "blessed issue things shall finally be brought to," and make them exceedingly happy, showing them "how happy a society the church of Christ is." Edwards's final reflection on the entire span of the work of redemption leads Edwards to proclaim: "*O happy people and blessed society.*" Therefore, this sermon history of the work of redemption points Edwards most supremely to happiness, and the promise of happiness as ultimate *telos*.

Yet, it is equally noteworthy that Edwards spends so little time describing the happiness of redemption within the sermons, as he does in the conclusion and in earlier sermons and notebook entries. It does not appear to be due to any waning interest in the subject, as his conclusion bears witness. Furthermore, at the same time Edwards is preaching the sermons, he continues to explore the implications of the work of redemption for happiness as ultimate *telos*. In Misc. 809, "Heaven," written during the fall of 1739, Edwards, with echoes of Charnock, argues that the happiness achieved by Christ's redeeming work will be far greater than that which Adam would have achieved. Adam would have "obtained eternal happiness," however it would have been a merely "earthly" felicity. On the other hand, Christ, "our second head":

...is one that properly belongs to heaven; he is the Lord from heaven, and the happiness he obtains by his obedience for himself and his spiritual posterity is eternal blessedness in his country, even heaven.⁹⁸

Edwards's first corollary is no less focused on the happiness of redemption: "Hence we may learn how vastly Higher and more glorious the happiness is that is purchased for the elect by Christ, than that which Adam would have obtained if he had stood."⁹⁹ Thus, Edwards's meditations on the work of redemption during the redemption sermons evidence Edwards's continued efforts to

⁹⁸ Edwards, Misc. 809, *WJE* 18, 513.

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 515.

articulate the happiness of his teleology from the perspective of the saving work of Christ, as he concludes Misc. 809:

The happiness that is by Christ is as much above what would have been by Adam, as heaven is high above the earth...by Jesus Christ, who is a divine person, we are brought to partake in a sort of the very happiness of God himself.¹⁰⁰

Furthermore, as a sermon series, *A History of the Work of Redemption* does not appear to have as its primary goal the defense of happiness as ultimate *telos*. The purpose of the sermons is rather, to describe in great detail the redemption story *itself*. Having more than sufficiently convinced himself of the happiness of the work of redemption, Edwards refines his focus toward a comprehensive exposition of the entire biblical redemption story. In fact, it appears likely that Edwards perceives himself to be providing through the redemption sermons, the object of true happiness, namely the excellency, or glory, of God in the work of redemption. Of course, the work of redemption will, by its content, achieve happiness, but Edwards is equally convinced that the work of redemption will, *by its proclamation*, produce happiness in his parishioners as they behold the glory of God in the redemptive historical account of the gospel, as the conclusion to the series implies: “Hence we learn how happy a society the church of Christ is: for all this great work is for them....Oh happy people and blessed society.” The knowledge of God’s work of redemption through the preaching of Edwards’s sermons convinces God’s people that they will be happy, and it means that they *are* happy. Therefore, instead using philosophical and theological arguments to convince of happiness as ultimate *telos*, *A History of the Work of Redemption* utilises the biblical redemption story itself to convince his hearers of happiness as ultimate *telos*.

This notion that the “consideration” of the work of redemption provides the knowledge and conviction of the great and ultimate happiness of God’s

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

people is articulated by two “Miscellanies” entries written in 1738 just prior to the sermon series. First, Misc. 741, “Happiness of Heaven,” opens:

There is scarce anything that can be conceived or expressed about the degree of the happiness of the saints in heaven, the degree of intimacy of union and communion with Christ, and fullness of enjoyment of God, *but what the consideration of the nature and circumstances of our redemption by Christ do allow us, and encourage us, to hope for.*¹⁰¹

Edwards comes to the conclusion, as he approaches *A History of the Work of Redemption*, that “the nature and circumstances of our redemption by Christ” is what enables human beings to conceive and be convinced of the great happiness of heaven. Thus, I am suggesting that the ultimate purpose of *A History of the Work of Redemption* is to set before the minds of Edwards’s parishioners, the “nature and circumstances” of the work of redemption for the sake of convincing them of happiness as ultimate *telos*. The biblical details of the work of redemption are, according to Edwards, eminently capable of convincing human beings of spiritual happiness as ultimate *telos*, and they are even made happy as they hear it proclaimed in its historical fullness. Misc. 777, “Happiness of Heaven is Progressive...and consists very much in Beholding the manifestations that God makes of himself in the Work of Redemption,” also communicates this idea. In this entry, Edwards reflects on the progressive “manifestations that God makes of himself in the work of redemption,” particularly through Christ, and “especially do they see his glory as it is manifested in the work of redemption.”¹⁰² Edwards’s corollaries include first, an argument reminiscent of John Owen’s Christocentric “Beatifical Vision,” in which Edwards defines the beatific enjoyment of God, not merely in terms of beholding the “being and perfections of God,” but by the “manifestations God makes of himself in his Son...by seeing him in Christ the Redeemer,” his person, works, redemption, and fruit of that redemption.¹⁰³ Edwards imagines heaven and

¹⁰¹ Edwards, Misc. 741, *WJE* 18, 366 (emphasis added).

¹⁰² Edwards, Misc. 777, *WJE* 18, 427, 430.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, 431.

earth as one grand theater in which God puts his glory on display in the work of redemption through Christ for the sake of the happy beatific enjoyment of God. Of the saints in heaven, Edwards writes, "their happiness in so great part consists in beholding the work of redemption," and "the happiness of heaven is in Christ the Redeemer, and their vision and enjoyment of God is through him and his redemption."¹⁰⁴ Thus, it appears that these reflections that lead up to the sermon series convince Edwards that the glorious history of the work of redemption through Christ is capable of providing human beings with the glorious object of true and ultimate happiness. As Boersma writes, Edwards's version of the enjoyment of the beatific vision is "an account that regards Christ - the "grand medium" of the *visio dei* - as the consummate theophanic appearance of God."¹⁰⁵ Therefore, Edwards does not *argue for* his teleology of happiness in *A History of the Work of Redemption*, but rather, he *aims to produce happiness* in his people by enabling them to be convinced of happiness as ultimate *telos* as they behold the glory of God in Christ and the work of redemption.

4.7 Redemption Happiness is the *End of Creation*

Edwards's intense interest in demonstrating the happiness of redemption during the 1720s, and especially the 1730s, for the sake of his teleological vision does not represent a passing phase. The redemptive historical arguments for happiness as ultimate *telos* established during this period are crucial to the ongoing development of Edwards's teleology, up to and including his mature teleological statement in *End of Creation*.

Misc. 1081, "Texts that seem to show that the communication of God's goodness and HAPPINESS is the END OF THE CREATION,"¹⁰⁶ is a clear demonstration of Edward's enduring effort to utilise the biblical account of

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Hans Beersma, "The "Grand Medium": An Edwardsean Modification of Thomas Aquinas on the Beatific Vision," 188.

¹⁰⁶ Edwards, Misc. 1081, *WJE* 20, 465.

redemptive history to defend happiness as ultimate *telos*. An examination of Misc. 1081, written in the mid-1740s, allows us to see that Edwards continues to defend the same redemptive historical thesis he developed during the 1730s, that God's work of redemption through Christ is ultimately for the communication of happiness to the creature. Immediately following an entry that records Biblical texts supporting the idea that God's glory is an ultimate end in creation, Edwards quickly returns to his longstanding and ultimate concern in Misc. 1081 to defend the notion that "happiness is the end of the creation." Indeed, this entry references Misc. 461, "End of the Creation," written in 1730, which argues that God's communication of happiness to the creature is not a subordinate, but rather ultimate end, on the basis of God's delight. Similarly, Edwards reasons in Misc. 1081 that if "God delights in mercy" and "loves to show mercy for mercy's sake,"¹⁰⁷ he necessarily delights in his communication of goodness and happiness for its own sake as an ultimate end, as Edwards's writes in his title, "the communication of goodness and HAPPINESS is the END OF THE CREATION." Edwards's primary Biblical evidence for this claim is Psalm 136, which, as we have already discussed, is the subject of Edwards's 1736 Thanksgiving sermon and related "Blank Bible" entry, which also argue that mercy, and therefore, goodness, or happiness, is the ultimate end of God's redemptive work. As he writes, "it appears that God's works from the beginning of the world to the end, even judgments on the wicked are works of goodness or mercy to his people."¹⁰⁸ Indeed, Edwards includes this note: "See more arguments in my sermon on this Psalm, preached at a thanksgiving (Nov., 1736). See also notes on this Psalm, "Miscellanies" [No.] 702, and Corol. 1."¹⁰⁹

Therefore, Misc. 461 from 1730, the Thanksgiving sermon and "Blank Bible" note from 1736, and the foundational "work of redemption" *Miscellanies* entry from Nov. 1736, Misc. 702, written over the course of several years, each

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Edwards, Misc. 1081, *WJE* 20, 465.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

contribute to the development of Edwards's thesis about happiness as ultimate *telos*. Recall that corollary 1 of Misc. 702 argues explicitly that "it is a great confirmation that God's communicating happiness to the creature stands in the place of a supreme end, because we see that that work, even making the creature happy by redemption, is the end of all God's other works."¹¹⁰ Each of these texts, along with Misc. 1081 written during the 1740s, therefore, contribute to defending on the basis of redemptive history, Edwards's conviction that happiness is not a subordinate, but rather an ultimate end of creation.

There is also a notebook entry that Edwards's writes around the time he revises *End of Creation* that is indicative of Edwards's conviction that the purpose of redemption, and thus, creation, is most ultimately, happiness. In Misc. 1296, "New Heavens and New Earth," Edwards describes the happiness of God's people – and even the happiness of all of creation – upon the completion of the work of redemption and commencement of the glorious reign of Christ:

The Scriptures from time to time represent as though *a most happy and glorious alteration* should be made in the face of the world when Christ should reign in his glory, or shall have accomplished *the redemption and happiness of his people*, as though the heavens and earth should rejoice, the mountains and hills break forth into singing, the fields be joyful and all the trees clapping their hands, the deserts being glad...Doubtless there shall be something that will answer these representations in the highest perfection of all when Christ shall ascend to reign in his greatest glory in heaven, *having accomplished the most complete redemption and happiness of all his elect people*.¹¹¹

Lastly, the argument Edwards has been making his entire career, that the communication of happiness to the creature through redemption demonstrates happiness as the "end of the creation," plays a significant role in his most mature teleological statement in *End of Creation*. Known best for its philosophical theological content, the less explicitly biblical *End of Creation* is nevertheless

¹¹⁰ Edwards, Misc. 702, *WJE* 18, 309.

¹¹¹ Edwards, Misc. 1296, *WJE* 23, 239 (emphasis added).

anchored by Edwards's redemptive historical perspective for the sake of highlighting happiness as ultimate *telos*.

The first place to see Edwards utilise his historical redemptive arguments for happiness in *End of Creation* is the fifth section of Chapter Two, entitled, "Places of Scripture from whence it may be argued that communication of good to the creature was one thing which God had in view as an ultimate end of the creation of the world," which is introduced by this statement:

I. According to the Scripture, communicating good to the creature is what is itself pleasing to God; and that this is not merely subordinately agreeable, and esteemed valuable on account of its relation to a further end...what God is inclined to on its own account, and what he delights in simply and ultimately.¹¹²

The Scriptures Edwards lists in defense of the teleological status of God's communication of good include Neh. 9:17, Ps. 103:8, Ps. 145:8, Mic. 7:18, Ezek. 18:32, and Lam. 3:33, the latter three of which are used in Misc. 461, which recall, argues explicitly for happiness as ultimate *telos*, and not subordinate to God's glory. In this section, Edwards draws from several previously recorded observations in his *Miscellanies* notebook that defend happiness as ultimate *telos* based on the work of redemption. First, Edwards gathers together over ten Scriptures that demonstrate that "the work of redemption wrought out by Jesus Christ" is from God's "grace and love," which "does not well consist with his seeking a communication of good to them only subordinately, i.e. not at all from any inclination to their good directly, or delight in *giving happiness to them*."¹¹³ It is not consistent with the Scriptures, argues Edwards, to say that God communicates good and gives happiness "only subordinately." Edwards's fourth point argues, "That the government of the world, in all parts of it, is for the good of such as are to be the eternal subjects of God's goodness," which is, he observes, taught by the Scriptures as they present Christ as Lord over all

¹¹² Edwards, *End of Creation*, WJE 8, 503.

¹¹³ Ibid, 504-5 (emphasis added).

creation, “that he may promote their happiness.”¹¹⁴ Edwards's fifth point produces biblical evidence that “God uses the whole creation, in his whole government of it, for the good of his people,”¹¹⁵ and sixth, Edwards demonstrates that “God’s judgments on the wicked world, and also their eternal damnation in the world to come, are spoken of as being for the happiness of God’s people.”¹¹⁶

The fact that these arguments are, as we have seen, developed previously in the *Miscellanies* notebook, demonstrates, once again, that Edwards’s efforts to defend his teleology of happiness represent a career long endeavor, consisting of biblical research and reflection on the work of redemption aimed at bolstering his teleological framework within the Reformed tradition. Even the closing lines of *End of Creation* explicitly refer to God’s “grace” as that which God satisfies by his ultimate *telos* of granting “eternal felicity,” implying of course, the work of redemption: “I suppose it will not be denied by any that God, in glorifying the saints in heaven with eternal felicity, aims to satisfy his grace or benevolence, by the bestowment of a good infinitely valuable, because eternal...”¹¹⁷ Thus, as he concludes his mature teleological statement, *End of Creation*, Edwards has at the forefront of his mind the “eternal felicity” achieved by the grace of God’s redemption.

Even after Edwards has written *End of Creation* near the end of his career and life, he continues to explore redemptive history for the sake of demonstrating happiness as ultimate *telos*. In Misc. 1353, Edwards argues that the promises of the “covenant of grace” necessarily imply and require the happiness of God’s people. Edwards considers the “Two Dispensations Compared,” those of Moses and of Christ, and declares, “The future blessings of the covenant of grace, the life and happiness of a future state, were not only in some degree revealed, but also in some sort promised, i.e. the revelation was

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 507-8.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 508.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 509.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, 536.

such as did convey a right to these blessings and brought God under obligation to bestow them,” concluding:

*The general promises of the covenant, which were express – the promises of God’s being their God and their being his people, his portion, his special favorites, his peculiar treasure; of God’s being their exceeding great reward; of God’s making them happy in a vast distinction from the wicked – implied happiness, and could not be fulfilled without.*¹¹⁸

4.8 Conclusion

Therefore, Edwards spends his entire career mining the biblical account of redemptive history for the sake of his Reformed defense of happiness as ultimate *telos*. Whether from the perspective of God’s redemption decree, the Old Testament promises of the covenant of grace, the incarnation and death of Jesus Christ, the salvation of sinners through the suffering passion of Christ, the consummation of redemptive history, or heaven itself, redemption history is consistently described and utilised by Edwards for the sake of defending his teleology of happiness. Edwards also utilises Reformed soteriology that is based on the biblical account of redemption, particularly justification and union with Christ, for the sake of defending his teleology of happiness. Of course Edwards adheres to the high teleological view of God’s glory common to the Reformed tradition, but when we appreciate the Reformed context of Edwards’s career-long endeavor, we are able to see Edwards’s longstanding purpose to defend happiness from its subordination to God’s glory in the Reformed teleological vision.

Edwards’s writings on the history of redemption do not evidence an agenda to make the sovereignty and glory of God supreme as the scholarship often claims, but rather they continue to equate divine glory with human happiness and aim to defend happiness from its subordination in the Reformed teleological scheme. Having proven his teleology in philosophical and general

¹¹⁸ Edwards, Misc. 1353, *WJE* 23, 494 (emphasis added).

theological terms on the basis of the communicative goodness of God during the early 1720s, and having established a Trinitarian teleological framework highlighted by the happiness of the Trinity and the Holy Spirit, Edwards intensifies his focus on the work of redemption through the Son as the means of God's communication of goodness and happiness, for the sake of defending his Reformed teleology of happiness.

Chapter 5: The Happiness of God's Glory

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will examine the development of Edwards's doctrine of the glory of God as it relates to his teleological framework and highlight the way in which Edwards applies theological creativity for the sake of defining the divine glory in terms of happiness in order to defend his Reformed teleology of happiness. Edwards's efforts to articulate the glory of God in terms of happiness for the sake of his teleology takes place over the course of Edwards's entire career, which is revealed in the *Miscellanies* notebook, several sermons, and especially *Discourse on the Trinity* and *End of Creation*. By exposing this strategy of Edwards regarding the glory of God, particularly against the backdrop of underappreciated elements of both the internal and external context, the present chapter will demonstrate that the primary and enduring agenda of Edwards's teleological project is the defense of the teleological status of happiness, rather than God's glory. This is not to say that Edwards departs from his tradition's adherence to the high teleological status of the glory of God. In fact, as we have already discussed, Edwards's thesis about happiness as ultimate *telos* consistently assumes this important Reformed doctrine. Edwards's project contends not with the teleological status of God's glory, but with the way that the articulation of this doctrine in Reformed circles tends to subordinate and devalue human happiness in the teleological discussion.

We have already discussed the creative strategy Edwards explores for the sake of defending his Reformed teleology of happiness in Misc. 92, "End of the Creation," justifying a theocentric doctrine of creation in terms of God's happiness, rather than the traditional glory of God.¹ This important notebook

¹ "I answer, that which is done for the gratifying of a natural inclination of God, may very properly be said to be done for God. God takes complacence in communicating felicity, and he made all things for this complacence. His complacence in this, in making happy, was the end of creation. Rev. 4:11, "For thy pleasure they are and were created.'" Edwards, Misc. 92, *WJE* 13, 256.

entry, which marks the beginning of Edwards's career long endeavor to defend his teleology of happiness within a Reformed theological framework, represents Edwards's initial effort toward defining the glory of God in terms of happiness, which creative strategy endures throughout Edwards's entire career for the sake of defending happiness as ultimate *telos*. Describing the glory of God in terms of happiness is not uncommon among the Reformed,² nor is it foreign to Enlightenment philosophers.³ Therefore, while Edwards's strategy to define glory in terms of happiness for the sake of his teleology of happiness represents some degree of theological *innovation*, it does not represent radical theological *inventiveness*.

Over the course of his career, Edwards, in various ways, seeks to articulate the *ad extra* and *ad intra* glory of God in terms of happiness in order to protect and preserve the high teleological status of human happiness. By exposing Edwards's continuous and extensive efforts in this regard, it will be demonstrated that Edwards's teleological project does not strive to reconcile God's glory and human happiness merely for the sake of solving a perennial theological conundrum, nor for the defense of the supremacy of the glory of God

² te Velde, *Paths Beyond Tracing Out*, 205.

³ Turnbull likens "glory" to "happiness" several times in his *Moral Philosophy*. Turnbull, *Principles of Moral Philosophy*, 443, 459. Similarly, Spinoza writes in his *Ethics*: "Love or blessedness is called glory in the Holy Scriptures, and rightly so," because "spiritual contentment...cannot be distinguished from glory," which is God's "pleasure (if we may still use this term) accompanied by the idea of himself." Benedict de Spinoza, *Ethics*, ed. Edwin Curley (New York: Penguin Books, 1996), 218-19. Jonathan Israel has shown that Spinoza influences seventeenth century Dutch clergy in this regard, particularly Frederick van Leenhof (1647-1712), whose *Den hemel op aarden* (Heaven on Earth) of 1703 employs "familiar theological terms in an unorthodox manner to propagate ideas which had little connection with Christianity as commonly understood," in order to promote a "'kingdom of happiness' on earth" that has "no role for Redeemer, Gospel, grace, sacraments, or divine Providence," with happiness defined in *teleological* terms, as the "knowledge and love of God." Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 410-12. Notwithstanding his lack of orthodoxy, Leenhof's strategy bears similarities to Edwards's teleology, which is evidence that Edwards is not alone in his desire to articulate Christian teleology in terms of happiness, an orthodox version of which Edwards attempts to provide.

in the face of an anthropocentric Enlightenment, but Edwards's primary agenda is rather, to defend the teleological status of human happiness within a Reformed theological framework.

5.2 Defining God's Glory in Terms of Happiness

Subsequent to Misc. 92, Edwards continues to articulate God's "end of creation" in terms of the happiness of God, rather than the traditional glory of God, for the sake of his Reformed teleology of happiness. Written in late 1726, Misc. 271, "End of the Creation," is nearly identical to Misc. 92, yet Edwards substitutes the happiness of God for the glory of God in particularly Christocentric and redemptive historical terms. "God," reasons Edwards, as the Alpha and Omega, "should make himself his end" in the creation of the world and "this may be, and yet the reason of his creating the world be his propensity to goodness, and the communication of happiness to the creatures be the end."⁴ In the same way that Edwards justifies this seemingly contradictory notion in Misc. 92 by the fact that God takes "complacence" in his communicative goodness in Misc. 92, Edwards reconciles this idea in Misc. 271 based on the fact that God's love and goodness make him, "really happy":

It perhaps was thus: God created the world for his Son, that he might prepare a spouse or bride for him to bestow his love upon; so that the mutual joys between this bride and bridegroom are the end of the creation. God is really happy in loving his creatures, because in so doing he as it were gratifies a natural propensity in the divine nature, viz. goodness.⁵

Therefore, even three years after writing Misc. 92, Edwards continues to avoid naming God's interest in the creation 'the glory of God' by utilising the happiness of God, which in the case of Misc. 271 enables the unification of God's interest and the happiness of the creature in terms of the biblical marriage analogy and

⁴ Edwards, Misc. 271, *WJE* 13, 374.

⁵ Ibid. Misc. 271 is, therefore, good evidence that 'complacence' and 'joy' are for Edwards, nearly synonymous with 'happiness.'

the “mutual joys” of the union of Christ and the church. As we have discussed, the happiness of union with Christ, or God, has always been central to Edwards’s conception of happiness as ultimate *telos*, and it is no less vital to Edwards’s *End of Creation*, written nearly thirty years later. Commenting in that work, “God sought” the “creature’s good” as “the end of his works”:

Yet it don’t necessarily follow, that even in so doing, he did not make himself his end. It comes to the same thing. God’s respect to the creature’s good, and his respect to himself, is not a divided respect; but both are united in one, as *the happiness of the creature aimed at is happiness in union with himself*.⁶

Therefore, the “mutual joys” of union with Christ in Misc. 271 anticipates *End of Creation*, which argues that “the happiness of the creature aimed at is happiness in union with himself,” providing a way for Edwards to speak of God as his own end *in terms of happiness* rather than glory, which protects Edwards’s teleology from the subordination of happiness, while at the same time maintaining a *theocentric* doctrine of creation, as required by the Reformed tradition.

Edwards’s intention to deemphasise and reevaluate traditional teleological conceptions of the glory of God is in fact revealed by the entry that immediately precedes Misc. 271. In Misc. 270, “Glory of God,” Edwards writes:

That no actions are good but what have the honor of God as their chief end proposed, is not necessary...Even glorifying God is not a good end any further than our seeking his glory springs from love; and if a desire of enjoying God springs more from love than [does] a desire [of] honoring him, it is a better principle.⁷

Thus, as he approaches writing Misc. 271, “End of the Creation,” Edwards makes the bold claim (from the Reformed perspective) in Misc. 270 that good actions are *not* always best understood as having the honor, or glory, of God as their “chief end.” Edwards reasons that “enjoying God” need not be for the sake

⁶ Edwards, *End of Creation*, WJE 8, 535 (emphasis added).

⁷ Edwards, Misc. 270, WJE 13, 374.

of honoring, or glorifying God, which would subordinate that enjoyment as a 'means to' glorifying God. Thus, Edwards deemphasises the glory of God in order to avoid the subordination of happiness for the sake of defending his Reformed teleology of happiness, which is precisely his strategy in Misc. 271. Rather than searching for ways to promote the glory of God, as the scholarship tends to assume, Edwards is manifestly interested in structuring a Reformed teleology that is capable of maintaining *happiness* as ultimate *telos*, as these two *Miscellanies* entries demonstrate.

Soon after Misc. 271, Edwards writes two notebook entries in 1727 that demonstrate Edwards's desire to articulate his doctrine of the glory of God in such a way that will fit his teleology of happiness. Misc. 243 and Misc. 247, which are each entitled, "Glory of God," have garnered a fair amount of scholarly attention for the sake of interpreting Edwards's "end of creation" project. McClymond and McDermott claim that the inspiration for Misc. 243 and Misc. 247 is Edwards's sudden discovery of "the biblical teaching that God created the world for his own "name," "glory," or "praise,"" which leads him to abandon his allegiance to happiness *per se* as the ultimate end of creation.⁸ However, as I have shown, the Reformed Edwards had always assumed this high teleological status of the divine glory, and had never promoted the idea that happiness *per se* is the ultimate end of creation. Therefore, the significance of these entries must be something different.

Rather than representing a major shift in Edwards's teleological view, Misc. 243 simply presents a few biblical texts (John 17, John 12:28, and Is. 42:8) that appear to Edwards to support the idea that "God's glory" is "good" in and of itself, a "good independent of the happiness of the creature; that is a good absolutely and in itself." Edwards nevertheless maintains his steadfast commitment to *happiness* as ultimate *telos*, as his conclusion to this short entry reveals:

⁸ McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 11.

Though it still appears to me exceedingly plain that to communicate goodness is likewise an absolute good, and what God seeks for itself, and that the very being of God's goodness necessarily supposes it; for to make happy is not goodness if it be done purely for another superior end.⁹

Therefore, the biblical evidence for God's glory as a "good absolutely" does not deter Edwards from his prior commitment to the communication of happiness as an absolute good and ultimate end; *rather, it strengthens it*. Rather than creating a problematic duality between God's glory and human happiness, as McClymond and McDermott suggest,¹⁰ Edwards's identification of God's glory as an absolute good further legitimises Edwards's claim that creation is "for God" in that it makes him happy, as he has been arguing, yet in an additional sense. God is made happy by his own goodness, as Misc. 94 and Misc. 271 declare, but also by his own glory. If God's glory is an absolute good worthy to be sought for its own sake, as Edwards states in Misc. 243, then it is fitting that *God should take delight it*, which further supports Edwards's teleology of happiness that defines God's interest in the creation in terms of divine *happiness* rather than divine glory.

Furthermore, Edwards applies the resources of Misc. 243 to Misc. 247, "Glory of God," in order to preserve and defend happiness as *telos*, in two primary ways. First, Edwards defines God's *ad extra* glory in terms of "*himself*" *communicated*, which fortifies his teleology of God's communication of happiness, and second, he will protect the aseity of God for the sake of that teleology. First, Edwards defines God's "formal" *ad extra* glory:

For God to glorify himself is to discover himself in his works, *or to communicate himself* in his works, which is all one.¹¹

That God's glory *ad extra* is defined by the communication of *himself ad extra* enables Edwards to reconcile the concept of God's *ad extra* glory with his

⁹ Edwards, Misc. 243, *WJE* 13, 359.

¹⁰ McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 11.

¹¹ Edwards, Misc. 247, *WJE* 13, 360 (emphasis added).

teleology defined by the communication of God's goodness, or happiness. In other words, Edwards's bolsters his teleology of happiness by defining God's glory in terms of God's communication *of himself* to the creature. The notion of God communicating *himself* fits Edwards's teleological framework that makes God's communication of happiness ultimate *telos*, as it provides a foundation from which to explain God's communication of happiness to the creature in terms of the happy Trinity established by Misc. 94, especially the Holy Spirit, "the comprehension of all happiness," God *himself*. Therefore, Edwards's doctrine of God's *ad extra* glory as "*himself*" *communicated* is specifically developed to fit his teleology of the communication of happiness, which furthermore, protects the aseity of God:

Therefore God don't seek his own glory because it makes him the happier to be honored and highly thought of, but because he loves to see himself, his own excellencies and glories, appearing in his works, loves to see *himself communicated*. And it was his inclination to *communicate himself* that was a prime motive of his creating the world. His own glory was the ultimate [end], *himself was his end, that is, himself communicated*.¹²

Edwards concludes the entry, "So that the glory of God is the shining forth of his perfections; and the world was created that they might shine forth, *that is, that they might be communicated*."¹³ The doctrine of the *ad extra* glory of God as the *communication of God* therefore, fits Edwards's teleology of divinely communicated happiness, especially when we consider Edwards's doctrine of the happiness of the Trinity and the Holy Spirit. Thus, Edwards's conception of the *ad extra* divine glory in Misc. 247 does not serve the promotion of the divine glory *per se*, but rather, it represents the foundation from which Edwards might continue to develop his definition of the glory of God in terms of the happiness of God, for the sake of his Reformed teleology of happiness.

¹² Edwards in fact utilises this argument almost thirty years later in *End of Creation*. See Edwards, *End of Creation*, WJE 8, 446-47.

¹³ Edwards, Misc. 247, WJE 13, 361 (emphasis added).

Edwards's efforts in this regard become exceedingly clear in Misc. 370, "Trinity," written shortly after Misc. 247, as it exhibits the precise confluence of doctrines I am suggesting are meant to serve Edwards's teleology of happiness. In this entry, Edwards describes the sun as a "remarkable" and "lively image" of the Trinity, and the Spirit:

The Spirit, as it is God's infinite love and happiness, is as the internal heat of the sun; but as it is that by which God communicates himself, is as the emitted beams of God's glory. II Cor. 3:18, "We are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."¹⁴

God's communication of "himself," or his "glory," is by the Spirit, who is "God's infinite love and happiness." Thus, Edwards's definition of God's *ad extra* glory as the communication of *himself* in Misc. 247 serves to explain God's communication of happiness to the creature, by the Spirit of God, in Misc. 370. Holmes interprets Edwards at this stage as having:

...introduced various possibilities for God's ultimate purpose in creating the world which all overlap to some extent: the exercise of God's goodness, the communication of God's happiness; the display of God's glory.¹⁵

However, when the internal and external contexts regarding happiness are fully appreciated, Edwards does not appear to introduce "various possibilities" for explaining the "end of creation," but as continuing to work to establish and defend his Reformed teleology of *happiness* on the basis of the crucial Reformed doctrines Holmes mentions. Edwards's efforts do not represent an unbiased query *per se*, rather Edwards has a particular agenda, a thesis, which

¹⁴ Edwards, Misc. 370, *WJE* 13, 441. Holmes is right to point out Edwards's "conscious invocation of Trinitarian doctrine" during this stage, however Holmes's primary focus is to describe the ways in which Edwards tries to protect the aseity of God. Holmes, *God of Grace and God of Glory*, 40. My thesis suggests that Edwards's Trinitarian reflections also (and mainly) serve to explain a *positive* theological framework for his Reformed teleology of *happiness*.

¹⁵ Holmes, *God of Grace and God of Glory*, 39-40.

he is working to defend within a biblical and Reformed theological framework: God created the world for the happiness of the creature.

Edwards's focus on "God's glory" during this time does not signal a departure from speaking about the "end of creation" in terms of the communication of happiness. Misc. 283, "Christian Religion," written in late 1727, demonstrates that in the midst of a heightened focus on explaining the "glory of God," Edwards remains fully committed to his original teleology of happiness:

CHRISTIAN RELIGION, the reasonableness and congruity of it. It is most reasonable and gloriously wise, *that seeing God created this earth for so great happiness to the creature in the enjoyment of himself*, to suppose that there should be one that should be the head of the rest, that hath the nature of that sort of beings that is the end of the creation, in an ineffable manner most united to the Godhead; and that he should be proportionately more happy than the rest...¹⁶

Therefore, just a few months after writing about the teleological import of the "glory of God" in Misc. 243 and Misc. 247, Edwards reflects on the Christian religion and the work of redemption, and marvels at the sufferings of Christ that accomplish God's ultimate plan that Edwards describes thus: "God created this earth for so great happiness to the creature in the enjoyment of himself."

During this time, Edwards can also be found explicitly defining God's communication of himself as the communication of God's happiness, which demonstrates the precise agenda I have been describing. Misc. 332, "End of the Creation," draws from Edwards's work in Misc. 247 on the glory of God and Misc. 94 on the Trinity for the sake of describing a more comprehensively Trinitarian teleology of happiness, to which I previously alluded:

The great and universal end of God's creating the world was to communicate himself. God is a communicative being. The communication is really only to intelligent beings: the communication of himself to their understandings is his glory, and the communication of himself with respect to their wills, the enjoying faculty, is their happiness.

¹⁶ Edwards, Misc. 283, *WJE* 13, 380 (emphasis added).

God created the world for the shining forth of his excellency and for the flowing forth of his happiness.¹⁷

Divine communication is described as twofold, in Trinitarian terms with respect to both the understanding and the will, in such a way as to include happiness, for which Edwards's previous work on the Trinity provides the foundation. The knowledge of God, the Son, corresponds to the faculty of understanding for the sake of beholding the glory, or excellency of God, and the "love and delight" of God, the Holy Spirit, corresponds to the will, "the enjoying faculty," which "is their happiness." Thus, Edwards defines the communication of God and his glory in such a way as to preserve the communication of happiness as ultimate *telos*, as Edwards writes, "God created the world for the shining forth of his excellency and for the flowing forth of his happiness." As with Misc. 370, the Holy Spirit is the communication, or "flowing forth" of God's happiness. The divine communication is not a new concept suddenly employed for the sake of 'subsuming' independent, opposing concepts (divine glory and human happiness), as McClymond and McDermott suggest.¹⁸ Rather, Edwards defines the divine glory as God's self-communication for the sake of preserving and defending his preexisting teleological thesis about happiness as ultimate *telos* on the basis of the *ad intra* Trinitarian happiness. Therefore, the significance of Misc. 332 is not merely the reconciliation of divine glory and human happiness, but rather, the way in which Edwards defines and shapes his doctrine of the glory of God for the sake of protecting and preserving his teleology of happiness within a Trinitarian and Reformed theological framework, which strategy is likewise revealed by Edwards's *Discourse on the Trinity*.

5.3 *Discourse on the Happiness of the Triune Glory*

¹⁷ Edwards, Misc. 332, *WJE* 13, 410. The emergence of this more comprehensively Trinitarian framework for Edwards's teleology of happiness will be explained further in the following section.

¹⁸ McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 10-11.

As we have already observed, and as Holmes correctly perceives, Edwards increasingly turns to his doctrine of the Trinity for the sake of establishing his teleology during the late-1720s.¹⁹ Subsequent to writing Misc. 94, “Trinity,” Edwards works to develop a Trinitarian framework for his teleology of happiness, as I have demonstrated, and Edwards’s *Discourse on the Trinity* is also representative of that agenda. In fact, I would suggest that Edwards’s primary motivation for writing the *Discourse*, which he begins in 1730, is as with Misc. 94, the defense of his teleology of happiness. Rather than a defense of a reasonable doctrine of the Trinity,²⁰ or response to “anti-trinitarian polemics,”²¹ the *Discourse* is written mainly for the sake of defining and defending his teleology of the communication of the Triune happiness to the creature as ultimate *telos*, in no way subordinate to the glory of God. Specifically, Edwards writes the *Discourse* in order to define the *ad intra* glory of God in terms of happiness, for the sake of effectively correlating the *ad intra* Triune glory (i.e. happiness), with the *ad extra* glory (i.e. happiness communicated), which notion, recall, Edwards has already previewed in Misc. 332, “End of the Creation.”

That Edwards would conceive of the *ad intra* glory of God in terms of *happiness* with teleological implications should not come as a surprise, as an intimate connection between the divine glory and happiness for the sake of understanding God’s *ad extra* communications is not uncommon to the Reformed tradition, as te Velde, citing Mastricht, writes:

God’s glory has the aspect of happiness or beatitude (*beatitas/beatitudo*). This term gives the second order of divine attributes a conclusion similar to that of the first order. God is both happy in himself and is the source of happiness of others. Just as we have seen in the

¹⁹ Holmes, *God of Grace and God of Glory*, 40.

²⁰ “He wanted, in his discourse, to demonstrate that such a revealed understanding of God is not inimical to reason and so undeserving of faith.” Thomas G. Weinandy, “Jonathan Edwards: ‘Discourse on the Trinity,’” in *The Ecumenical Edwards: Jonathan Edwards and the Theologians*, ed. Kyle C. Strobel (New York: Routledge, 2016), 67-68; Studebaker and Caldwell, *Trinitarian Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 61.

²¹ Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards’s Theology*, 69.

discussion of God's goodness, here it is stated that God's happiness is overflowing towards God's creatures.²²

This is precisely the aspect of God's glory Edwards has in mind: "God is both happy within himself and is the source of happiness of others...God's happiness is overflowing towards God's creatures," and the *Discourse*, I am suggesting, is Edwards's specifically Trinitarian articulation of the *ad intra* side of this doctrine, which is also not uncommon to Edwards's Reformed sources. Te Velde writes that the "blessedness" of God, conceived as "God...fully delighted and content with himself," provides, citing Mastricht again, an interpretation that, "gives this insight a Trinitarian color by pointing to the mutual self-glorification of the three Persons in God."²³ Thus, the glory of the Trinity is conceived of by Edwards's favorite theologian as the *ad intra* Triune *happiness* of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which is in its *ad extra* expression, the "source of happiness of others...overflowing towards God's creatures." Edward's *Discourse* applies this same doctrine, defining the Triune glory of God in terms of happiness for the sake of defending his teleology of God's communication of "himself" as the communication of God's *happiness*. Edwards is in fact studying Mastricht's economic Trinity at the same time he begins the *Discourse*.²⁴

The following sections will demonstrate the way in which Edwards develops the *Discourse* for the sake of defining the *ad intra* glory of the Trinity in terms of happiness in order to describe the *ad extra* glory of the economic Trinity in terms of happiness communicated to the creature, which is his teleological agenda. The main purpose of the *Discourse*, therefore, is not an apology for the Trinity *per se*, but the provision of a Trinitarian framework for Edwards's Reformed defense of happiness as ultimate *telos*.

²² te Velde, *Paths Beyond Tracing Out*, 204.

²³ Ibid, 204-205.

²⁴ Edwards cites Mastricht on the economic Trinity in Misc. 482, also written in 1730: "CONCERNING THE ECONOMY OF THE PERSONS OF THE TRINITY AND THE CHURCH'S COMMUNION WITH GOD. See Mastricht, Lib. II, cap. 24, § 11." Edwards, Misc. 482, *WJE* 13, 524.

5.3.1 *The Internal Context*

Edwards's *Miscellanies* notebook provides us with valuable context with which to comprehend the teleological agenda of the *Discourse*. The few notebook entries focused on the "end of the creation" written immediately before and after the *Discourse* demonstrate both Edwards's concern to defend happiness against subordination as ultimate *telos*, and his purpose to apply his doctrine of the Trinity for the sake of this teleology. Misc. 445, Misc. 448, and Misc. 461, the only entries written explicitly on the subject, "End of the Creation," during the 1729-31 period, provide a layer of internal context that frames and helps explain the *Discourse*. We will first discuss Misc. 445, written in late-1729, and Misc. 461, written during the spring of 1730, which represent 'bookends' for the *Discourse*, which Edwards began in early 1730. These entries demonstrate that Edwards's teleological project is at this time particularly aimed at defending happiness against subordination, which both entries explicitly address as their central purpose. Misc. 448 and the *Discourse* relate to each another in a more directly technical sense, as Misc. 448 marks Edwards's first comprehensive attempt at demonstrating the correlation between the *ad intra* and *ad extra* operations of the Trinity, akin to what we saw Edwards preview in Misc. 332. This doctrine provides for the Trinitarian framework of Edwards's teleology of happiness, particularly as the *Discourse* will define the *ad intra* glory of God in terms of *happiness*.

Misc. 445 and Misc. 461, again, both entitled "End of the Creation," are explicitly focused on happiness as an ultimate, rather than subordinate, end, which I am suggesting helps explain the context for the *Discourse*, which is written in order to support the development of Edwards's teleology of happiness expressed by these notebook entries. Recall that the concluding note of the first corollary of Misc. 702, which argues, "God's communicating happiness to the creature stands in the place of a supreme end," reads "See Nos. 461, 445,"²⁵ which is a clear indication that Misc. 445 and Misc. 461 are considered by

²⁵ Edwards, Misc. 702, *WJE* 18, 298.

Edwards, even seven years later in 1737, as crucial support for his defense of happiness as ultimate *telos*. Recall as well that Samuel Willard's influential *Compleat Body*, which explains human happiness as subordinate to the glory of God, is published in 1726 in Boston just a few years before Edwards writes Misc. 445 and Misc. 461.

Edwards responds to this tendency of the Reformed teleological vision with Misc. 445, "End of the Creation," which states that the communication of God's happiness "is not merely a subordinate end but stands in the place of an ultimate end," on the basis of the nature of God's goodness:²⁶

There is a necessity of supposing that the exercise of God's goodness, or the communication of his happiness, is not merely a subordinate end but stands in the place of an ultimate end, though there is no necessity of supposing it the only ultimate end. But if God's making his glory to appear be an ultimate end, this must stand not in subordination to it but fellow to it, and in the same rank with it.²⁷

There are two reasons that the communication of God's happiness to the creature cannot represent a subordinate end. First, the nature of goodness will not allow it: "For to suppose that God's communication of goodness is wholly subordinate to some other end, is to suppose that it is not from God's goodness":

Thus if God makes the creature happy only for a further [end], viz. that he may manifest his own perfections by it, then his making the creature happy is not indeed from his goodness, or his disposition to communicate good, but wholly from that attribute or disposition of the divine nature whereby he is disposed to show forth his own excellency. It is not consistent with the nature of goodness to be wholly moved and excited by something else that is not goodness.²⁸

According to the nature of goodness, "making the creature happy" may not be subordinate, or a means to, some further end, such as the manifestation of God's "perfections" or "excellency," i.e. God's manifest glory, as is the tendency

²⁶ Edwards, Misc. 445, *WJE* 13, 492-3.

²⁷ *Ibid*, 492.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 492-93.

of Reformed thinkers such as Willard. Second, Edwards corrects the derivative inclination to subordinate happiness by saying God communicates good, or happiness, merely for the sake of manifesting the glory of his goodness, which Edwards demonstrates to be void of logic, as it would shift the meaning of “goodness” from an inclination to be good, or “make happy,” to an inclination to glorify goodness.²⁹ Therefore, Edwards is intensely interested in defending the ultimate teleological status of the communication of God’s happiness, which, according to Edwards, cannot be comprehended as subordinate to the glory of God.

While the argument of Misc. 445 is based on the nature of the goodness of God, the original and foundational doctrine of Edwards’s teleology, the argument against the subordination of happiness in Misc. 461, written a few months *after* the *Discourse*, is, not coincidentally, based on God’s *happiness*:

See Nos. 445, 702 (corol. 1). If God delights in the creatures' participation of his happiness for its own sake, then it is evident that the communication of good is not merely a subordinate end, but must be allowed the place of an ultimate end; for if it be for its own sake, then it is not wholly for the sake of something else as its end. But 'tis evident that God delights in goodness for its own sake...³⁰

Since God delights in goodness, or the “creature’s participation of his happiness,”³¹ for its own sake, the “communication of good” which is the happiness of the creature, is “not merely a subordinate end, but must be allowed the place of an ultimate end.”

²⁹ Ibid, 493.

³⁰ Edwards, Misc. 461, *WJE* 13, 502.

³¹ That Edwards begins to integrate the language of “participation” in Misc. 461 after writing *Discourse on the Trinity* is significant as it recalls the “*Miscellanies*” notes discussed earlier that flowed out of his initial reflections on the Trinity in Misc. 94 and the Holy Spirit, which provided Edwards with a basic Trinitarian framework for his teleology of happiness: The Holy Spirit, i.e. the “delight” of God, or “comprehension of all happiness,” is the source of happiness communicated by the Father and Son, through the gospel, and *participated* in by the creature. *Discourse on the Trinity*, which Edwards has very recently begun, is similarly integral to Edwards’s Trinitarian teleology of happiness, *participated in by the creature*, as I will demonstrate.

Therefore, the primary focus of Edwards's reflections on the "end of creation" during 1729-30 when Edwards begins the *Discourse* is the defense of happiness as ultimate *telos* in response to the common Reformed teleological scheme that tended to exalt the divine glory and subordinate the creature's happiness. Just as Edwards's doctrine of the Trinity in Misc. 94 serves his teleology of happiness during the winter of 1723-24, *Discourse on the Trinity* is written for this same purpose, particularly for the sake of establishing a comprehensively Trinitarian teleological framework that can defend human happiness as ultimate *telos*, in no way subordinate to the glory of God.

Misc. 448, "End of the Creation," written just prior to the *Discourse*, reveals Edwards's particular attention to the symmetry of the *ad intra* and *ad extra* operations of the Trinity, which helps reveal the technical purpose of the *Discourse* for the sake of Edwards's teleology. That is, the *Discourse* explains the *ad intra* glory of the Trinity in terms of happiness in order to support Edwards's teleological vision of the *ad extra* communication of God's happiness, which represents God's *ad extra* glory.³²

Misc. 448, written just three entries after Edwards defends happiness as ultimate *telos* in Misc. 445, returns to the subject of God's *ad intra* life, particularly God's glory *ad intra*, which he correlates with God's glory *ad extra* in defense of the aseity of God. Since "God is glorified within himself" in the same way "God glorifies himself towards the creatures....what God has in view...is not that he may receive, but that he [may] go forth," and this is "for the sake of" God's own delight, "the delight in his own act," indeed, "there is no way that the world can be "for" God more than [this]."³³ This is Edwards's first explicitly Trinitarian elaboration of his defense of God's aseity with respect to divine delight, or happiness: "Both these ways of God glorifying himself come from the

³² As Strobel is keen to observe, "God's character of knowing and delighting in his own beatific envisaging serves as the ground and explication of glory, the end for which God created the world and the end for which God created creatures." Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology*, 70.

³³ Edwards, Misc. 448, *WJE* 13, 495-96.

same cause, viz. the overflowing of God's internal glory, or an inclination in God to cause his internal glory to flow out *ad extra*," and therefore, in creating God does not seek to "receive," but to "go forth" and "be received" by the creature, in which "God takes delight."³⁴

God's internal glory, and his internal glory flowing out *ad extra*, are described in the Trinitarian terms we know from Misc. 94 represent the happiness of God:³⁵

God is glorified *within himself* these two ways: (1) by appearing or being manifested to himself in his own perfect idea, or, in his Son, who is the brightness of his glory; (2) by enjoying and delighting in himself, by flowing forth in infinite love and delight towards himself, or, in his Holy Spirit.

So God glorifies himself *towards the creatures* also two ways: (1) by appearing to them, being manifested to their understandings; (2) in communicating himself to their hearts, and in their rejoicing and delighting in, and enjoying the manifestations which he makes of himself.³⁶

Therefore, Edwards correlates the *ad extra* operations with the *ad intra* operations of the Triune God in terms of the divine happiness, under the banner of the glory of God. God "glorifies himself" in the creature *ad extra* just as he is "glorified within himself" *ad intra*, by the understanding and the will. According to Crisp, this element of Edwards's theology has its roots in the "ancient principle" *opera trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa*, whereby "the internal processions in the ontological Trinity, by which the different persons are distinguished and God is glorified "within himself," are echoed in the emanation of God in the created order," or put another way, "The Holy Trinity is engaged in displaying his glory in a way that mirrors the internal structure of his own life, in that which he

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ "'Tis oft said that *God is infinitely happy from all eternity* in the view and enjoyment of himself, in the reflection and converse love of his own essence, that is, in the perfect idea he has of himself, infinitely perfect." Edwards, Misc. 94, *WJE* 13, 256.

³⁶ Ibid, 495.

creates.”³⁷ This doctrine is common to Reformed orthodoxy, as with Mastricht, who believes that the economic Trinity *ad extra* “reveals” the ontological *ad intra* Trinity,³⁸ and Baxter, who similarly believes, the “internal relations of the Godhead” provide “the foundation of the relationship of the Godhead to the world.”³⁹

Again, Edwards’s heightened attention to the divine glory does not signal a shift away from happiness as the central concern of Edwards’s teleology. Edwards has become comfortable using the phrase “God glorified” to explain the “end of the creation” due to the fact that he has already satisfied himself that “God glorified” *ad extra* is most ultimately, the communication of his happiness. Furthermore, Edwards is not finished explaining his Trinitarian framework. Just a couple of months later in early 1730, Edwards will utilise this same framework in *Discourse on the Trinity* in order to define the *ad intra* glory of God in terms of happiness for the sake of explaining the *ad extra* glory of God in terms of happiness, thus preserving the teleological status of happiness as ultimate, in no way subordinate to the glory of God.

5.3.2 *Discourse on the Happiness of the Trinity*

The centrality of happiness in Misc. 94, “Trinity,” continues with Edwards’s *Discourse on the Trinity*. The *Discourse* is more extensive and detailed than Misc. 94, yet a broad continuity between the two documents remains, especially regarding the happiness of God. That Edwards is just as concerned to demonstrate the Triune happiness in the *Discourse* as he is in Misc. 94 is evidenced by the opening line, which echoes explicitly the opening doctrinal statement of Misc. 94:

When we speak of God's happiness, the account that we are wont to give of it is that God is infinitely happy in the enjoyment of himself, in perfectly beholding and infinitely loving, and rejoicing in, his own

³⁷ Crisp, *Jonathan Edwards on God and Creation*, 91.

³⁸ Neele, *The Art of Living to God*, 224.

³⁹ Muller, *PRRD4*, 114-15.

essence and perfections. And accordingly it must be supposed that God perpetually and eternally has a most perfect idea of himself, as it were an exact image and representation of himself ever before him and in actual view. And from hence arises a most pure and perfect energy in the Godhead, which is the divine love, complacency and joy.⁴⁰

Edwards is intent to demonstrate more than a doctrine of the Trinity *per se* by the *Discourse*. He means to demonstrate a doctrine of the happiness of the Trinity for the sake of explaining the happiness of the creature as ultimate *telos*. God's internal glory is represented by God's *happiness*, God's infinite enjoyment of God, perfectly knowing, loving, and rejoicing in himself, which Edwards will apply to his doctrine of the Trinity on the basis of the Augustinian mental analogy.

The *Discourse* is about the happiness of God, and it is developed for the sake of explaining the happiness of the creature. It has the same ultimate purpose as Misc. 94, however this time Edwards's particular technical purpose is to describe the *ad intra* glory of God in terms of happiness for the sake of his teleology that names the communication of God's happiness, "the glory of God." Similar to the way that Misc. 94 serves Edwards's initial teleological statement, "happiness is the end of the creation," the *Discourse* serves Edwards's teleology of happiness, albeit more comprehensively and precisely regarding God's glory and the Trinitarian detail outlined by Misc. 448.

5.3.2.1 *The Happy Image of God*

Foundational to the *ad intra* - *ad extra* correlation of divine glory that serves Edwards's teleology of happiness is the direct correlation Edwards establishes between the divine mind and the human soul made in the image of God, which is emphasised at the outset of the *Discourse*:

Though the divine nature be vastly different from that of created spirits, yet our souls are made in the image of God: we have understanding and

⁴⁰ Edwards, *Discourse on the Trinity*, WJE 21, 113 (emphasis added).

will, idea and love, as God hath, and the difference is only in the perfection of degree and manner.⁴¹

On the basis of the *imago Dei* as Edwards's understands it, which is based on the *vestigia trinitatis*, human happiness is like the divine happiness consisting of the idea and love of God, only less perfect. This makes sense of the creature's participation of God's happiness, which is central to Edwards's teleology,⁴² as this the psychological framework necessary to demonstrate happiness as ultimate *telos* is established, enabling Edwards to describe the *ad extra* glory of God in terms of the happy *imago Dei*.⁴³ Strobel argues that Edwards's application of the *vestigia trinitatis* is for the sake of a polemical purpose, to explain the "personhood" of God.⁴⁴ However, when the internal context I have highlighted is appreciated, Edwards's use of the *vestigia trinitatis* appears to be primarily aimed at defending his teleology of happiness, as it establishes the necessary correlation between the *ad intra* happiness of God and the *ad extra* communication of God's happiness to the creature made in God's image.

Edwards is not a pioneer in this regard, but rather follows his Reformed tradition. Muller argues that John Owen believes that "human beings made in the image of God" are the "principle form of the glory of God."⁴⁵ Owen writes that it is in the "demonstration and representation" of God's "holiness and righteousness" in the *imago Dei*, that "the glory of God principally exist."⁴⁶ In fact, Owen, like Edwards, has teleology in mind when he writes on this subject:

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Wilson notes, "The concept of all goods participating in God's omnibenevolent nature is the classic expression of this idea in Christian thought," which for Aquinas relates directly to the analogous view of human likeness to God. Wilson, *Virtue Reformed*, 39.

⁴³ Edwards's *End of Creation* utilises the *imago Dei* in similar fashion. Edwards's argument that God's "supreme regard to himself" should "appear" in "those things by which he makes himself known, or by his *word* and *works*," is explained by the *imago Dei*. That is, "supreme regard" to God will appear in "*an image of himself their author*," a "proper representation of his divine excellencies, and especially his moral excellence." Edwards, *End of the Creation*, WJE 8, 422.

⁴⁴ Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology*, 51.

⁴⁵ Muller, *PRRD3*, 549.

⁴⁶ Owen, *Works*, Vol. I, 182-83.

“Evident it is that these were the principal ends of God in the creation of all things.”⁴⁷ It is also evident that Owen has the “enjoyment” of God in mind, reflecting on the fall:

In the entrance of sin, and by apostasy from God, man voluntarily rejected and defaced this *blessed* representation of the righteousness and holiness of God – this great effect of his goodness and wisdom, in its tendency unto his eternal glory, and our *enjoyment* of him.⁴⁸

Although Owen does not use the language of divine communication and creaturely participation,⁴⁹ he does imply as much, and as with Edwards, the *imago Dei* explains happiness and the *ad extra* glory of God. Owen believes that “this image of God implanted in our natures,” is a “*blessed* representation” of God’s holiness and righteousness, which represents the glory of God and the creature’s enjoyment of God.⁵⁰ Owen’s Trinitarian framework in this regard is nearly identical to Edwards’s:

Yet, as herein doth the principal part (if we may so speak) of the blessedness of the holy God consist (“this ineffable mutual love of the Father and the Son, both in and by that Spirit which proceeds from them both”), so is it the only fountain and prototype of all that is truly called love; - a blessing and glory which the creation had never been made partaker of, but only to express, according to the capacity of their several natures, this infinite and eternal love of God! For God’s love of himself – which is natural and necessary unto the Divine Being – consists in the mutual complacency of the Father and the Son by the Spirit.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 183.

⁴⁸ Ibid (emphasis added).

⁴⁹ The language of communication and participation with respect to the *imago Dei* is not uncommon among the Reformed, as with Leigh, who writes, “we ought to learn, above all, to seek after God’s glory, to “labor to *partake* of God’s image, that we might be *partakers* of his glory – we must earnestly desire that God’s glory may be *communicated* to us, that he would send forth his Spirit of glory to rest upon us.” Leigh, quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 550-51. Owen appears to reserve “communication” language for the *ad intra* Trinitarian processions, as with the Son: “His being the only-begotten Son declares his eternal relation unto the person of the Father, of whom he was begotten *in the entire communication of the whole divine nature*.” Owen, *Works*, Vol. I, 144.

⁵⁰ Owen, *Works*, Vol. I, 183.

And it was to express himself, that God made anything without himself. He made the heavens and the earth to express his being, goodness, and power. He created man “in his own image,” to express his holiness and righteousness; and he implanted love in our natures to express this eternal mutual love of the holy persons of the Trinity.⁵¹

Thus, according to Owen, God made the world in order to “express” an image of the “blessedness” of the love of the Trinity in the creature made in his image. The triune God is a “fountain” of “blessing and glory,” which the creature bearing God’s image is made to “express” as its ultimate *telos*.

Charnock articulates a similar doctrine, which is strikingly similar to Edwards’s. Charnock states that God created the world in order to “manifest his excellency” in the following way:

God...did not make the world for himself in such a kind, but for himself, i.e. the manifestation of himself and the riches of his nature; not to make himself blessed, but *to discover his own blessedness to his creatures, and to communicate something of it to them.*⁵²

Charnock believes that God made the world in order to “discover” and “communicate” his “own blessedness” to the creature. Regarding the *imago Dei*, Charnock writes, ““He made him after his own image in holiness.” He imparted to him a spark of his own comeliness, *in order to a communion with himself in happiness.*”⁵³ God did not make man like an angel, writes Charnock,

*...but in the image of the blessed God, to be confirmed to the Divine nature: that as he was conformed to the image of his holiness, he might also partake of the image of his blessedness...to instate him in an invariable felicity.*⁵⁴

Charnock, like Edwards, is intent to describe God’s work of creation as it relates to the *imago Dei*, as for the sake of human happiness, and “not simply” God’s glory:

⁵¹ Ibid, 145.

⁵² Charnock, *Existence and Attributes of God*, Vol. II, 229 (emphasis added).

⁵³ Ibid, 248 (emphasis added).

⁵⁴ Ibid (emphasis added).

He (God) enjoined men's services to them not simply for his own glory, but his glory in men's welfare... 'I never intended to enjoin you to anything to impair, but increase your happiness.'⁵⁵

Indeed, Charnock articulates his teleology in precisely the same way as Edwards: "The Scripture," writes Charnock, "doth very emphatically express the felicity of man to be the design of God in the first forming him and moulding him a creature, as well as working him a new creature."⁵⁶ Thus, Edwards's conception of the *imago Dei*, which appears to derive from his Reformed heritage, is established by the *Discourse* in order to lay the Trinitarian foundation necessary for his teleology of happiness.

5.3.2.2 *The Happiness of the Father and the Son*

As with Misc. 94, Edwards's discussion of the idea, or Son, of God in the *Discourse* is grounded in the happiness of God in several places, and it reveals Edwards's intent to define the glory of the Son in terms of happiness. Immediately after establishing the concept of the "idea" of God as "an express and perfect image of him, exactly like him in every respect," who is "absolutely himself," the Deity generated, "the second person of the Trinity, the only begotten and dearly beloved Son of God,"⁵⁷ Edwards particularly supports his argument with the biblical notion of the happiness of God:

This well agrees with what the Scripture teaches us concerning God's love to and delight in his Son: for the idea of God is that image of God that is the object of God's eternal and infinite love, and in which he hath perfect joy and happiness. God undoubtedly infinitely loves and delights in himself and is infinitely happy in the understanding and view of his own glorious essence; this is commonly said.... So the Father calls him his elect, in whom his soul delighteth [Isaiah 42:1]. The infinite happiness of the Father consists in the enjoyment of his Son. Proverbs 8:30, "I was daily his delight," i.e. before the world was. It seems to me most probable that God has his infinite happiness but one way, and that the infinite joy

⁵⁵ Ibid, 254.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 256.

⁵⁷ Edwards, *Discourse on the Trinity*, WJE 21, 114, 116-17.

he has in his own idea and that which he has in his Son is but one and the same.⁵⁸

Perfect and infinite happiness explains the Trinity. The object of God's happiness is the knowledge that he has of himself in his perfect image, the Son. God's *ad intra* happiness is, therefore, the Father's "infinite happiness" in "the understanding and view" of his own "glorious essence," his perfect idea and image, his Son. There is even a sense in which the glory of the Son is for the sake of God's delight:

This seems also well to agree with Christ being called the brightness, effulgence or shining forth of God's glory, upon two accounts. First, because 'tis by God's idea that his glory shines forth and appears to himself. God may be conceived of as glorious, antecedent to his idea of himself; but then his glory is latent. *But 'tis the idea by which it shines forth and appears to God's view, so that he can delight in it.*⁵⁹

Thus, as with Misc. 448, the *Discourse* describes the internal Triune glory of God in terms of happiness. Whereas the infinite happiness of the Father and the Son serves primarily to defend the aseity of God for Edwards's teleology of happiness in Misc. 94, this relationship in the *Discourse* is particularly aimed at defining the glory of God in terms of happiness, for the sake of establishing the *ad intra* basis for the *ad extra* communication of happiness to the creature.

5.3.2.3 *The Happy Spirit*

Edwards's doctrine of the Spirit in the *Discourse* continues to emphasise happiness and the *actus purus* of God, as with Misc. 94. The Spirit, Edwards writes, is "another manner of subsistence," proceeding from the Father and the Son, the "most pure act, and an infinitely holy and sweet energy...between the Father and the Son...mutually loving and delighting in each other." Edwards explains, "The Deity becomes all act; the divine essence itself flows out and is

⁵⁸ Ibid, 118.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 119 (emphasis added). This framework is also described in Misc. 448. Edwards, Misc. 448, *WJE* 13, 495-96.

as it were breathed forth in love and joy.”⁶⁰ Thus, Edwards continues to develop a doctrine that will establish the Spirit’s operation *ad extra* as the immediate source of the creature’s love and joy, i.e. happiness. In fact, Edwards’s reflections on the *ad intra* operation of the Holy Spirit lead him, as they did in Misc. 94, into an extensive discussion of the *ad extra* mission of the Spirit, which represents Edwards’s ultimate agenda for the sake of his teleology of happiness.

As soon as Edwards finishes his doctrine of the *ad intra* Holy Spirit, his discussion shifts to the *ad extra* operations of the Spirit in order to explain the creature’s “partaking” of the Spirit for “communion with God,” in which the language of happiness is prominent. “It is a confirmation that the Holy Ghost is God’s love and delight,” writes Edwards, “because the saints’ communion with God consists in their partaking of the Holy Ghost”:

The communion of saints is twofold: 'tis their communion with God, and communion with one another....Communion is a common partaking of goods, either of excellency or happiness. So that when it is said the saints have communion or fellowship with the Father and with the Son, the meaning of it is that they partake with the Father and the Son of their good, which is either their excellency and glory— 2 Peter 1:4, "Ye are made partakers of the divine nature"; Hebrews 12:10, "That we might be partakers of his holiness"; John 17:22–23, "And the glory which thou hast given me I have given them; that may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me"— or of their joy and happiness, John 17:13, "That they may have my joy fulfilled themselves." But the Holy Ghost, being the love and joy of God, is his beauty and happiness; and it is in our partaking of the same Holy Spirit that our communion with God consists....In this also eminently consists our communion with the saints, that we drink into the same Spirit: this is the common excellency and joy and happiness in which they all are united.⁶¹

Thus, the primary implication of attributing “love and joy” to the Holy Spirit is to comprehend the saints’ “partaking” of the Holy Spirit as a partaking of the “beauty and happiness” of God, even “the common excellency and joy and happiness” of all the saints in communion with God. The *ad intra* operation of

⁶⁰ Ibid, 121.

⁶¹ Ibid, 130-31.

the Spirit correlates with the *ad extra* operation of the Spirit, which doctrine Edwards applies for the sake of his teleology of happiness. The importance of this doctrine to Edwards is evidenced by the fact that just months after Edwards writes the *Discourse*, he writes Misc. 471, “Spirit’s Operation. Conviction. Conversion.”:

[T]he Spirit of God in the souls of saints exerts its own proper nature; that is to say, it communicates and exerts itself in the soul in those acts which are its proper, natural and essential acts in itself *ad intra*, or within the Deity from all eternity.⁶²

That the *ad extra* work of the Spirit reveals the *ad intra* operation of the Spirit is crucial to understanding Edwards’s doctrine of the Trinity, and it is common to the Reformed tradition, as Muller writes, “The *ad intra* procession of the Spirit is mirrored and followed by the *ad extra* procession or “mission” of the Spirit.”⁶³ This is central to Edwards’s *Discourse*, as it is vital to Edwards’s teleology, due to the fact that, according to Edwards, the Spirit is the “comprehension of all happiness.”

Lastly, Edwards illustrates his doctrine of the Spirit in the *Discourse* by using his familiar analogy of the sun, which again emphasises the communication of God’s happiness. There is an “eminent and remarkable” image of the Trinity in the sun:

The Spirit, as it is God’s infinite love to himself and happiness in himself, is as the internal heat of the sun but as it is that by which God communicates himself, is as the emanation of the sun’s action, or the emitted beams of the sun.⁶⁴

When Edwards describes the Holy Spirit in the *Discourse*, his ultimate concern is to create a foundation for his teleology, as the Spirit of God is “that by which God communicates himself,” whose *ad extra* operation mirrors the *ad intra*

⁶² Edwards, Misc. 471, *WJE* 13, 513.

⁶³ Muller, *PRRD4*, 378.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 138.

operation of “love and joy,” or love and happiness, which is central to Edwards’s Trinitarian teleology of happiness.

5.3.2.4 *Blessed Trinity*

Edwards’s concluding, summative discussion of the persons of the Trinity also reveals his agenda to establish the happiness of the *ad intra* Trinity, as Edwards’s writes, “And this I suppose to be *that blessed Trinity* that we read of in the holy Scriptures”:

The Father is the Deity subsisting in the prime, unoriginated and most absolute manner, or the Deity in its direct existence. The Son is the Deity generated by God’s understanding, or having an idea of himself, and subsisting in that idea. The Holy Ghost is the Deity subsisting in act, or the divine essence flowing out and breathed forth, in God’s infinite love to and delight in himself. And I believe the whole divine essence does truly and distinctly subsist both in the divine idea and divine love, and that therefore each of them are properly distinct persons.⁶⁵

Strobel argues that this summary statement of the “blessed Trinity” reveals Edwards’s “polemical task,” whereby he “lays the foundation to talk about God, not only as a person, but also as persons,” as “Edwards’s discussion of God finds its moorings in personhood.”⁶⁶ While I would not deny Edwards’s attention to this traditional doctrine, I would suggest that Edwards is rather, particularly intent on demonstrating the happiness, or blessedness, of the personal Trinity, particularly the happiness of the person of Holy Spirit. Thus, Edwards’s discussion of the Trinity appears to “finds its moorings” in happiness more than “personhood.” The antitrinitarian controversies are undoubtedly relevant, yet my interpretation of Edwards’s *Discourse on the Trinity*, which is based on the context of his own writings and the Enlightenment and Reformed teleological contexts, points to a motivation and purpose to establish the happiness of the *ad intra* glory of the Trinity, for the sake of his teleology of happiness.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 131 (emphasis added).

⁶⁶ Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards’s Theology*, 59, 62.

In fact, nearly fifteen years after the *Discourse* is written during the mid-1740s, Edwards can be found recording historical support for his doctrine of the happy Trinity in Misc. 1047, “Trinity.” While reading Owen’s *Discourse Concerning the Holy Spirit*, Edwards records a brief entry in his notebook that supports his view of the happiness, or blessedness, of the Triune God. He observes that, notwithstanding the fact that Owen calls the Spirit the “mutual love of the Father and the Son”:

In the same place, he (Owen) also says, “The mutual knowledge and love of Father and Son [...] are absolute, infinite, natural and necessary unto the being and blessedness of God.” And again, in the same section, says, “In these mutual, internal actings of themselves” (ie. the persons of the Trinity) “consist much of the infinite blessedness of the holy God.”⁶⁷

Edwards is clearly encouraged by Owen’s particular emphasis on the “blessedness” of the Triune God. Similarly, in 1753, immediately prior to penning *End of Creation*, Edwards finds additional historical support for the happiness of God in French contemporary Andrew Michael Ramsay’s theological writings, which explain the *ad intra* happiness of the Trinity and the happiness of the creature by the Holy Spirit’s operation *ad extra*. Misc. 1253 focuses on the Trinity *ad intra* and Misc. 1254, on the *ad extra* economic Trinity participated in by the creature. Edwards’s citations of Ramsay are remarkably similar to his own doctrine of God and the Trinity, as Ramsay grounds his doctrine in the goodness, knowledge, joy, and happiness of God. The following particularly reflects Edwards’s doctrine of the happiness of the Father in the idea, or Son, of God, which is for Ramsay, the ground of God’s “communicative goodness”:

Thus it is certain that antecedent to all communicative goodness towards anything external, God is good in himself and just to himself, and he is infinitely, eternally, and essentially active and intelligent; because as he produces within himself an absolutely infinite effect and idea, so he is infinitely, eternally, and essentially good and just. Infinitely good, because from the knowledge and enjoyment of his consubstantial idea

⁶⁷ Andrew Michael Ramsay, quoted by Edwards, Misc. 1047, *WJE* 20, 389.

flows an infinite sensation of joy, unbounded joy, an unspeakable pleasure, and an eternal self-complacency, which constitutes his uninterrupted happiness.

Ramsay, furthermore, argues for the Trinity on the basis of the love and “perfect felicity” of God:

The Deists, Unitarians, and Socinians, who deny the doctrine of the Trinity, cannot explain how God is essentially good and just, antecedent to, and independent of the creation of finite; for God cannot be eminently good and just, where there is no object of his beneficence and equity....Hence God’s consubstantial love of himself is sufficient to complete the felicity of his infinite will...To complete the idea of perfect felicity, there must be an object loving as well as an object loved.⁶⁸

Lastly, Ramsay grounds the “happiness” of the creature in the grace of the *ad extra* operations of the Triune God, including “supernatural illumination” and the “immediate influence of the Holy Ghost”:

Men indeed may acquire by a successive comparison of their ideas a natural knowledge and love of God, but not the supernatural knowledge and love we are speaking of. If this be otherwise, the soul might beget within itself the eternal Logos, and the Holy Ghost; be its own light, and its own love; its own perfection, and its own happiness.⁶⁹

Therefore, by recording in his *Miscellanies* notebook the historical support of Owen and Ramsay on the happiness of the Trinity, Edwards reveals his continued attention to this doctrine for the sake of his teleology of happiness throughout the 1740s and 1750s.

5.3.2.5 *The Happiness of the Triune Glory*

Edwards’s extended discussion in the *Discourse*, written to “briefly observe that many things that have been wont to be said by orthodox divines about the Trinity are hereby illustrated,”⁷⁰ also reveals the centrality of happiness in Edwards’s doctrine and a particular effort to describe the glory of God in terms of happiness. In discussing the equality of the persons of the

⁶⁸ Andrew Michael Ramsay, quoted by Edwards, Misc. 1253, *WJE* 23, 186-87.

⁶⁹ Andrew Michael Ramsay, quoted by Edwards, Misc. 1254, *WJE* 23, 189.

⁷⁰ Edwards, *Discourse on the Trinity*, *WJE* 21, 134-35.

Trinity, Edwards grounds their equal “honor and glory” in terms of the *ad intra* happiness:

The honor of the Father and the Son is, they are infinitely happy and they are the original and fountain of happiness; and the honor of the Holy Ghost is equal, for he is infinite happiness and joy itself.⁷¹

These unique reflections on the happiness of the Triune glory continue from the perspective of the economic operations of the Trinity *ad extra*. That is, the mutual “delight” of the Godhead with respect to the work of redemption is what grounds the “equality and honor and praise,” and “glory,” and even the “dignity and excellency” and “worth” of each divine person:

It shows the infinite dignity and excellency of the Father, that the Son so delighted and prized his honor and glory, that he stooped infinitely low rather than man’s salvation should be to the injury of that honor and glory. It showed the infinite excellency and worth of the Son, that the Father so delighted in him, that for his sake he was ready to quit his anger and receive into favor those that had [deserved] infinitely ill at his hands. And what was done shows how great the excellency and worth of the Holy Ghost, who is that delight which the Father and the Son have in each other, shows it to be infinite. So great as the worth of a thing delighted in is to anyone, so great is the worth of that delight and joy itself which he has in it.⁷²

In this regard, Edwards gives special and extended attention to the Holy Spirit, who is the infinite “delight and joy” of God, even “infinite happiness and joy itself.” Edwards’s argument is that the economic work of the Trinity in redemption is perfectly unified and equally glorious on the basis of a common economic relationship to the “Holy Ghost,” who is “God’s joy and happiness” granted by the Father, purchased by Christ, communicated to and participated in by the creature:

Our dependence, Edwards writes, is equally upon each in this affair: the Father appoints and provides the Redeemer, and himself accepts the price and grants the thing purchased; the Son is the Redeemer by offering up himself, and is the price; and the Holy Ghost immediately communicates to us the thing purchased by communicating himself, and

⁷¹ Ibid, 135.

⁷² Ibid, 135-36.

he is the thing purchased. The sum of all Christ purchased for man was the Holy Ghost. All the blessedness of the redeemed consists in their partaking of Christ's fullness, which consists in partaking of that Spirit which is given not by measure unto him...Christ purchased for us spiritual joy and comfort, which is in a participation of God's joy and happiness: which joy and happiness is the Holy Ghost, as we have shown.⁷³

Thus, the *Discourse* repeatedly reveals Edwards's purpose to ground his teleology in terms of the happiness of the Trinity, as it serves Edwards's larger purpose to understand happiness as ultimate *telos* in such a way that the communication of happiness is not subordinate to the glory of God. By defining the *ad intra* glory of the Trinity as the perfect happiness of the Godhead, Edwards is able to define the *ad extra* glory of God in terms of the happiness of the creature, which is his ultimate agenda.

This precise teleological framework is explicitly exhibited in a notebook entry that immediately follows the writing of the initial text of the *Discourse*, further demonstrating the significance and utility of Edwards's happy Trinity for his teleology. Edwards's notes on Psalm 36, written soon after the *Discourse* in his "Blank Bible," include comments on the divine "light" of Psalm 36:7-9, which explains the glory of God for the sake of explaining the happiness of God *and* the saints:

'Tis God's light in two respects. 1. As 'tis the light of the glory that shines forth from God, 'tis the light of God's glory. And 2. 'Tis the light that God enjoys, the light in which he is happy. So the saints have fellowship with God in his happiness....The same is meant by the other expression in the verse foregoing, "thou shalt make them to drink of the river of thy pleasures" [Psalms 36:8].⁷⁴

The "light" of God's glory is the knowledge of God, and since it is the light that "shines forth from God...in which he is happy," the saints, likewise enjoy the same happiness by this light: "the saints have fellowship with God in his happiness." Therefore, just after the initial text of the *Discourse* is written, the Trinitarian framework of Misc. 448 (and the *Discourse*) is applied to "God's light"

⁷³ Ibid, 136.

⁷⁴ Edwards, "Blank Bible," *Works of Jonathan Edwards Online*, Vol. 24, 492.

in Psalm 36, particularly for the sake of explaining the happiness of the saints as derived from fellowship with God and partaking of his happiness. In fact, when he opens his reflections on Psalm 36:7-9, Edwards explicitly references “Discourse on the Doctrine of the Trinity” and comments regarding Ps. 36:8, “By partaking of God’s “pleasures,” here is meant the pleasure which God enjoys...”⁷⁵ Thus, the Trinitarian framework introduced by Misc. 448 and the *Discourse* enable Edwards to describe the *ad extra* “glory” of God in terms of the creature “partaking of God’s pleasure,”⁷⁶ and “having fellowship with God in his happiness.”

Edwards’s *Discourse*, therefore, more extensively and carefully defines the *ad intra* happiness of the glory of the Godhead for the sake of explaining God’s *ad extra* communication of “himself,” particularly his happiness, to the creature. During the 1720s, Edwards had been content to comprehend the communication of God in terms of the Holy Spirit, however Misc. 448 and the *Discourse* elaborate on this doctrine in order to incorporate both the Son and the Spirit, the knowledge of God, and “love and delight” of God, into his teleology. Edwards’s treatment of the “communication” of God is nuanced in Misc. 448, creating the distinctions of “manifestation” and “communication,” which represent the intellectual and volitional glorification of God. Manifestation correlates to the divine intellect and corresponds to the idea, or Son, of God and the understanding of the creature, and communication correlates to the divine will, God “enjoying and delighting in himself,” his love and delight, the Holy Spirit, and the creature’s “rejoicing and delighting” in the manifestation of God’s glory. This not only creates a more detailed and comprehensive framework, but it more fully incorporates the traditional Reformed teleological concepts, the “glory of God” and the “manifestation” of God’s glory, while at the same time protecting the communication of happiness as the ultimate fruition of God

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ The material referencing God’s “pleasures” is explicitly derived from the discussion of the Spirit in the *Discourse*, as the Spirit is the one by whom the saints partake of God’s pleasure, or happiness. Edwards, *Discourse of the Trinity*, WJE 21, 128.

glorifying himself to the creatures. The happiness of the creature is not subordinate to the glory of God, rather it *is* the glory of God; and to show this in the Reformed context Edwards must define the *ad intra* glory of the Trinity in terms of happiness, so that the *ad extra* glory of God might be comprehended most ultimately in terms of the happiness of the creature. Therefore, the central motivation and technical purpose of the *Discourse* is to define the Triune glory in terms of happiness in order to correlate the *ad intra* operations of the Trinity with *ad extra* operations of the Trinity, for the sake of defending his Reformed teleology of happiness.

Notwithstanding some minor developments and enhancements, this general Trinitarian framework for Edwards's teleology of happiness endures throughout his entire career, which is evidenced by the *Miscellanies* entry that contributes directly to *End of Creation*, Misc. 1218, "End of the Creation, Glory of God." According to the foundation Edwards lays down in the *Discourse*, he writes in Misc. 1218: "That which proceeds from God *ad extra* is agreeable to the twofold subsistences which proceed from him *ad intra*, which is the Son and the Holy Spirit," God "exerting himself and communicating himself."⁷⁷ Thus, Edwards is able to describe the *ad extra* "expression" of God as twofold in terms of God's goodness, under the banner of "making the creature happy":

*Indeed God, in making the creature happy, seems as it were to express or exhibit himself ad extra two ways: not only does one of his perfections exercise itself in it, viz. his goodness; but there is something of God actually communicated, some of that good that is in God, that the creature hereby has communion in, viz. God's happiness. The creature partakes of the happiness of God, at least an image of it. And we must therefore conceive that there is a disposition in God, not only to exercise his attributes and perfections in this, but also to communicate his divine good.*⁷⁸

Thus, Edwards's Trinitarian framework also allows him to explain the original foundational doctrine of his teleology, the communicative goodness of God.

⁷⁷ Edwards, Misc. 1218, *WJE* 23, 151.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 151-52 (emphasis added).

God's goodness is comprehended as twofold, both exercised and communicated, which enables Edwards to say, again: "*there is something of God actually communicated, some of that good that is in God, that the creature hereby has communion in, viz. God's happiness. The creature partakes of the happiness of God, at least an image of it.*"

These several texts that follow the *Discourse* are strong indications that the it is written for the sake of the development of Edwards's teleology of happiness, which at this stage particularly responds to tendency of the Reformed tradition to subordinate happiness. Because of Edwards's work on the Trinity in Misc. 448 and the *Discourse*, the happiness of the creature is capable of representing the *ad extra* glory, or happiness, of God, thus eradicating the subordination of happiness. Therefore, by defining the *ad intra* glory of the Trinity in terms of happiness, Edwards is able to create a theological framework by which his teleology of happiness might be reconciled with the Reformed tradition's high view of the *ad extra* divine glory in the teleological vision.

5.4 The Happiness of God's Glory

Edwards does not relent from describing the glory of God in terms of happiness after writing *Discourse on the Trinity*. After establishing his doctrine of the happiness of the Trinity in the *Discourse*, Edwards becomes intensely focused during the 1730s on "the history of the work of redemption," which also serves to defend his Reformed teleology of happiness, as I have shown. In the midst of that project and later during the 1740s and 1750s, Edwards continues to make this creative theological effort to describe the glory of God in terms of happiness for the sake of his Reformed teleology of happiness.

Misc. 526, "Wisdom of God in the Work of Redemption," written soon after the *Discourse*, is an early example of Edwards interpreting the glory of the economic Trinity in terms of happiness for the sake of his teleology. Having defined the *ad intra* and *ad extra* glory and honor of the Triune God in terms of

happiness in the *Discourse*, Edwards is comfortable stating, “God made the world for his own glory.” However, rather than a departure from happiness as ultimate *telos*, Misc. 526 represents yet another description of the *ad extra* glory of God in terms of the happiness of the creature. “Jesus Christ has this honor, to be the greatest instrument of glorifying God that ever was, and more than all other beings put together,” writes Edwards, due to the fact that “Christ is the grand medium of all communications of grace and happiness from God, by which especially God glorifies himself...”⁷⁹ Thus, according to Edwards, the glory of God *ad extra* is particularly demonstrated by the gracious communication of happiness that comes through Christ and the work of redemption. The happiness of the creature achieved by the work of redemption defines the glorification of God in the world, which grants ultimate teleological status to happiness in the Reformed context. While the perception is that by the middle of his career, Edwards is busy striving to defend the glory of God in the face of an anthropocentric Enlightenment, what this and many other similar texts reveal is that Edwards continues to focus his efforts on developing a Reformed teleology of happiness.

Relatedly, there is evidence that Edwards is dissatisfied with the phrases, “God’s glory,” or “God’s being glorified,” in relation to his teleology, due to the fact that they inadequately communicate the notion of God’s communicative goodness and happiness. In 1743, Edwards writes in Misc. 1066, “End of the Creation,” regarding these terms:

Language seems to be defective and to want a proper general word to express the supreme end of the creation and of all God’s works, including both those two as branches of it.

The one supreme end of all things is the infinite good as it were flowing out, or the infinite fountain of light is as it were shining forth. We need some other words more properly and fully to express what I mean.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Edwards, Misc. 526, *WJE* 18, 70.

⁸⁰ Edwards, Misc. 1066, *WJE* 20, 446.

As Edwards concludes these reflections, he expresses his longstanding teleological agenda to articulate the “end of the creation” in terms of the communication of God’s goodness – and happiness:

This one supreme end consists in two things, viz. in God’s infinite perfection being exerted and so manifested, that is in God’s glorifying himself and second, his infinite happiness being communicated, and so making the creature happy. Both are sometimes in Scripture included in one word, namely God’s being glorified.⁸¹

While Edwards observes that the Scriptures do “sometimes” refer to these things as “God’s being glorified,” he nevertheless continues to long for a word that can incorporate the sense of the “infinite good” flowing forth, and “infinite happiness being communicated, and so making the creature happy.” Thus, Edwards’s struggle exists due to the fact that defending happiness as ultimate *telos* is the primary agenda of teleological project.

Indeed, soon after this entry, Edwards writes Misc. 1081, “Texts that seem to show that the communication of God’s goodness and HAPPINESS IS THE END OF THE CREATION,” which as we have already discussed, defends happiness as ultimate *telos* and not subordinate to God’s glory.⁸² Recall that this note references Misc. 461 and Misc. 701, as well as the Thanksgiving sermon and Blank Bible note on Psalm 136, which each explicitly defend happiness against subordination to God’s glory, and, in the case of Misc. 461, date back to the 1720s, which covers nearly twenty years of development. Admittedly, Edwards is simultaneously exploring the biblical warrant for calling the end of creation “God’s glory,” which he records in the preceding entry, Misc. 1080, “God’s Glory the End of the Creation.”⁸³ Yet, again, I am not suggesting that Edwards is arguing for happiness *per se* as the end of the creation, but that his purpose and agenda is to articulate the ultimate end of creation in such a way as to defend happiness as ultimate *telos* against rival claims that tend to

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Edwards, Misc. 1081, *WJE* 20, 465.

⁸³ Edwards, Misc. 1080, *WJE* 20, 462.

subordinate happiness, a development that dates back to the very beginning of Edwards's career.

5.4.1 Glory is a "Name" for Happiness

Evidence of Edwards's ongoing agenda to comprehend God's glory in terms of happiness surfaces immediately after Misc. 1081, as Edwards works to define the glory of God in terms of happiness in several *Miscellanies* entries. In Misc. 1082, "End of the Creation," Edwards writes:

Happiness is very often in Scripture called *by the name of glory*, or included in that name in Scripture.⁸⁴

Glory is a biblical *name*, but happiness is, according to Edwards, the biblical *concept* behind the name, whether in relation to the *ad intra* or *ad extra* divine glory. As we have already discussed, Edwards defines the *ad intra* glory of the Trinity as the happiness of God in the *Discourse*, and Edwards's confirms that stance in Misc. 1082: "The glory of the Lord," or "the excellency of God," is, writes Edwards, the "excellent sweetness and blessedness that is in God, and the infinite fountain of happiness that the Deity is possessed of." Likewise, the *ad extra* glory of God is represented by "joy and happiness," particularly the "communication of God's happiness." Edwards argues, "the glory of the Lord...seems to signify" the communication of God's happiness to the creature, as he writes, "The fullness of the saints' happiness is the riches of God's glory in the saints":

And so when we read of the glory promised or conferred to the saints, and of their being glorified, their unspeakable happiness is the main thing intended.⁸⁵

"Unspeakable happiness is the main thing intended" by the "glory" of the saints, writes Edwards, as he is intent to show that glory means happiness in order to defend happiness as ultimate *telos* within the Reformed teleological framework.

⁸⁴ Edwards, Misc. 1082, *WJE* 20, 466 (emphasis added).

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, 466.

In conclusion, Edwards confirms that comprehending the glory of God in terms of happiness makes sense of his familiar doctrine that states that the 'blessed' *ad intra* operations of the Triune God mirror the *ad extra* 'blessing' of God:

Therefore the diffusing the sweetness and blessedness of the divine nature is God's glorifying himself, in a Scripture sense, as well as his manifesting his perfection to their understandings. The beams that flow forth from the infinite fountain of light and life don't only carry light but life with them; and therefore this light is called the light of life, as the beams of the sun have both light and warmth, and do both enlighten and quicken, and so bless the face of the earth.

This twofold way of the Deity's flowing forth *ad extra* answers to the twofold way of the Deity's proceeding *ad intra*, in the proceeding and generation of the Son and the proceeding and breathing forth of the Holy Spirit; and indeed is only a kind of second proceeding of the same persons, their going forth *ad extra*, as before they proceeded *ad intra*.⁸⁶

The communication of God's happiness to the creature, "diffusing the sweetness and blessedness of the divine nature" to "bless the face of the earth," by the Son and the Spirit *ad extra* "answers to" the *ad intra* processions of the Son and the Spirit, which is "the blessedness of the divine nature," the happiness of God. Thus, the fruits of the *Discourse* continue to enable Edwards to define what is traditionally called the glory of God in terms of happiness, for the sake of defining the *ad extra* "flowing forth" of God in creation and redemption as the communication of God's *happiness* to the creature, Edwards's ultimate teleological agenda.

Misc. 1084, "End of the Creation," is further indication that Edwards has the *ad extra* communication of happiness in mind as he pursues defining glory in terms of happiness. Referencing Misc. 1082, Edwards writes, "The Holy Spirit seems to be called by the name of "glory" in John 17:22. Having already found biblical warrant for comprehending the glory of God in terms of happiness, Edwards discovers evidence that the communicative agent of that happiness,

⁸⁶ Ibid.

the Holy Spirit, is referred to “by the name of “glory.””⁸⁷ Furthermore, during this same time in his *Treatise on Grace*, Edwards is similarly focused on attributing happiness to the Holy Spirit with a discussion reminiscent of the *Discourse*, as Edwards defends the Spirit against subordination to the Son and the Father, which appears to be related to Edwards’s overall purpose to defend happiness against subordination in the Reformed teleological scheme. In the third chapter of *Treatise on Grace*, Edwards argues that it is “partaking of or having communion of the Holy Ghost” in which “All the blessedness of the redeemed consists,” indeed, he writes, the Holy Spirit is “the sum of all happiness.”⁸⁸ Edwards continues, “All our good is from the Father, and through the Son, and all is in the Holy Ghost, as he is himself all our good.” Therefore, Edwards writes, the Holy Spirit is not “subordinate to the other two persons” with respect to the “glory of this work”:

For the glory that belongs to him that bestows the gift, arises from the excellency and value of the gift; and therefore the glory is equal to that excellency of the benefit. And so that person that is that excellent benefit, has equal glory with him that bestows such an excellent benefit.⁸⁹

Thus, Edwards’s defense of the equal glory of the Spirit is based on the fact that the Spirit is “the sum of all happiness” and the gift given to the redeemed that is equal to the Father and the Son in “excellency and value.” Edwards’s defense of the Spirit represents a defense of happiness, which is not subordinate to the glory of God. In other words, happiness is not subordinate to the glory of the Father and the Son in the work of redemption, because the Spirit, who communicates himself to the creature, is the happiness (and the glory) of the Father and Son.

Misc. 1094, “End of the Creation. Glory of God,” which in fact cites Misc. 1082, 1084, and 1066, also reveals Edwards’s agenda to define the glory of God

⁸⁷ Edwards, Misc. 1084, *WJE* 20, 467.

⁸⁸ Edwards, *Treatise on Grace*, *WJE* 21, 190.

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 191.

in terms of happiness. Citing various Scriptures, Edwards opens the entry: “By the glory of God seems to be meant the flowing out of his goodness, or the communication of his fullness of happiness.”⁹⁰ The *ad extra* glory of God, according to Edwards’s interpretation of the Scriptures, seems to ‘mean’ “the communication of his fullness of happiness.” Thus, *happiness* is the ‘meaning’ of the *ad extra* glory of God. Edwards concludes, “When Moses besought God to show him his glory, God answered, “I will make all my goodness to pass before thee” (Ex. 33:18-19).”⁹¹ The manifestation of God’s glory is his goodness, i.e. his happiness communicated.⁹²

Later in his career, during the early 1750s, Edwards continues to develop his doctrine of the *ad extra* glory of God in terms of happiness, for the sake of defending happiness as ultimate *telos*. While Edwards conceives of the *ad extra* glory of God as twofold, as “manifestation” and “communication,” as in Misc. 1142, “Glory of God. End of the Creation,” the traditional Reformed doctrine is less dynamic, most often representing the “manifestation” of God’s “excellency,” as Muller describes:

The glory of God is correctly understood, argues Leigh, as Aquinas also said, as “the manifestation and shining forth of Excellency. God is said to glorify himself, when he manifesteth his unspeakable and incomprehensible excellency, Num. 14:21; Psalm 72:19; Levit. 10:3.”⁹³

However, Edwards, intent to make happiness the “end of creation,” continues to draw from the resources of *Discourse on the Trinity* to define the *ad intra* glory, or “fullness” of God as twofold: “tis his excellency and his happiness,” and hence, “There is a twofold faculty in the creature that the egress has respect to and which is its recipient subject, viz. manifestation and communication.”⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Edwards, Misc. 1094, *WJE* 20, 482.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 483.

⁹² Recall that Charnock utilises the same text to argue that God’s glory is the communication of his goodness. Charnock, *Existence and Attributes of God*, Vol. II, 227.

⁹³ Muller, *PRRD3*, 545.

⁹⁴ Edwards, Misc. 1142, *WJE* 20, 517.

Thus, Edwards enhances the traditional Reformed doctrine of the *ad extra* divine glory, defined as the “manifestation” of God’s glory, or excellency, by including the communication of happiness, as he writes, “There are three things called by the name of glory in Scripture: excellency,” and also, “goodness and happiness.”⁹⁵

The glory of God in the Reformed tradition is most often associated with the manifestation of God’s greatness, superiority, and honor, rather than God’s goodness. Edwards’s Dutch contemporary Herman Venema writes that, relative to God’s majesty, God’s glory indicates a “higher degree of honor,” as it “denotes all those perfections which render him infinitely superior to all other beings.”⁹⁶ Leigh writes that the glorification of God is “the acknowledgement and celebration of his Majesty...Angels and men glorify him when they extol his greatness and testify their acknowledgement of his glory.”⁹⁷ Muller summarizes:

This doctrine, therefore, points in two directions: on the one hand, the height of the divine glory and majesty is such that human beings, given their sin and “frailty,” are separated from the divine and incapable of bearing or withstanding the full vision of God – on the other hand, the glory and majesty of God are attributes that belong to the revelation of the divine presence and require that God “be revered by all that have to do with him.”⁹⁸

Therefore, the *ad extra* manifest glory of God in the Reformed tradition normally points to the transcendence and superiority of God, and the honor and reverence of God, rather than the communication of goodness and happiness to the creature. The Reformed doctrine states that the glory of God is, objectively, the manifestation of God’s perfection and excellency, and, formally, the acknowledgment and honor that is commensurate to that excellency, i.e. the glorification of God. Thus, the glory of God communicates the transcendence of God. The glory of God *ad extra* is objective, and it is to be honored and praised,

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Venema, quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 544.

⁹⁷ Ibid, 545.

⁹⁸ Muller, *PRRD3*, 546.

as Mastricht says, it is the “brilliance of God’s “perfection and eminence,” “recognized” and made “famous.”⁹⁹ Edwards, however, expands and elaborates the traditional doctrine, in a sense unifying the objective glory with the formal glorification of God by making the creature’s glorification of God a participation in the objective glory of God, by the communication of God’s happiness.

Edwards continues to explore ways to integrate the communication of happiness into the doctrine of God’s glory in Misc. 1151, “End of the Creation,” describing the twofold nature of God’s supreme end of creation entirely under the banner of “communication,” for the sake of making happiness the ultimate end of creation:

The one last end of all things may be expressed thus: it is that the infinite good might be communicated, that it might be communicated to, or rather in, the understandings of the creature, which communication is God’s declarative glory; and that it might be communicated to the other faculty, usually (though not very expressively) called the will; which is the making the creature happy in God as a partaker of God’s happiness.¹⁰⁰

It is remarkable that in this entry, the “declarative glory” of God, the knowledge of God, is in a sense, subordinated to the creature’s happiness in God. That is, the declarative glory is understood, “that it might be communicated” to the will, “which is the making the creature happy in God as a partaker of God’s happiness.” Thus, the happiness of the creature, rather than the “declarative glory,” is the ultimate action, or fruition, of God’s twofold communication. Throughout his career, therefore, Edwards continually explores various ways to define and conceptualise the “end of creation” in terms of the communication of God’s happiness.

By the time he writes Misc. 1218, “End of the Creation. Glory of God,” Edwards has settled on a conceptual understanding of the glory of God in terms of God’s communication of happiness, and is, thus content to call the “name” of the end of creation, as he will in *End of Creation*, “God’s glory”: “It may be called

⁹⁹ Mastricht, quoted by Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 104.

¹⁰⁰ Edwards, Misc. 1151, *WJE* 20, 525.

by one name, viz. God's glory." Nevertheless, several elements of this entry demonstrate Edwards's efforts to define the glory of God in terms of happiness.

First, Edwards's efforts to define what he will later call the original ultimate end of the creation reveal his commitment to the communication of happiness. What God's original disposition to "glorify himself," the "Scripture sense of such an expression," actually means is, "a disposition to express and communicate himself *ad extra*":

'Tis true, 'tis from an excellent disposition of the heart of God that God seeks occasion to exercise his goodness and bounty, and also his wisdom, justice, truth. And this, in one word, is a disposition to glorify himself according to the Scripture sense of such an expression, or a disposition to express and communicate himself *ad extra*.¹⁰¹

Therefore, the Scripture's "one word" for God's "disposition to express and communicate himself," is a "disposition to glorify himself." However, Edwards does not intend by this to deemphasise happiness, rather he simply provides a Scriptural "name" for that which Edwards has already defined in terms of the communication of God's happiness. Therefore, Edwards does not shift away from conceiving of the "end of the creation" in terms of happiness, as Edwards does not argue for the teleological status of the manifest "glory of God" *per se*, rather, satisfied that he has redefined the traditional Reformed doctrine of the *ad extra* glory of God in terms of the communication of God's happiness, Edwards is comfortable to call "the end of the creation" by the "name," God's glory.

Next, in order to establish his unique doctrine of God's glory, Edwards explicitly rejects the traditional notion that the glorification of God consists in his "honor." God does not seek to glorify himself, writes Edwards, "for the sake of the honor of his goodness." He reasons, as he had earlier, that this would be inconsistent with God's goodness, "For the very notion of goodness is an inclination of the heart to do good to others..." Edwards writes, "Therefore God's glorifying himself, that glorifying himself which is the end of the creation, is a

¹⁰¹ Misc. 1208, *WJE* 23, 150.

different thing from properly seeking his honor.”¹⁰² Edwards rejects the traditional notion as truncated and insufficient, and seeks to improve it in terms of God’s communicative goodness and happiness.

In fact, Edwards nearly affirms the notion of calling God’s original motive to create the world, his “goodness,” or, making “occasions for the doing good or communicating happiness.”¹⁰³ The only reason that “goodness” does not trump the name “glory” is that people might get the wrong idea, according to Edwards. That is, Edwards perceives the common understanding of divine goodness to be “a notion of a bountiful disposition in the heart of God disposed to increase the sum of happiness which is to be found in the universality of existence,” which Edwards must reject, as it denies the infinite happiness of the Trinity and threatens the aseity of God.¹⁰⁴ Thus, Edwards refrains from calling God’s original disposition to create, “goodness,” but this is not because goodness and the communication of God’s happiness no longer fits his conception of “the end of the creation.” Rather, it is due to the fact that Edwards has come to perceive that the term “goodness” is associated with an *increase* of happiness, which would of course be problematic. Nevertheless, Edwards admits that “goodness” is the appropriate concept, provided it is correctly defined:

To desire new beings to communicate happiness to ‘em, especially without increasing the sum of happiness, don’t agree with the notion mankind have of goodness, benevolence, grace, etc. Men may call this disposition in the heart of God by the name of goodness if they please.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Edwards, Misc. 1218, *WJE* 23, 151. Conceiving of God’s glory as the “honor” of God is not an outdated Calvinist doctrine. John Brine, a British contemporary of Edwards, is quoted in Misc. 1357: “If our end in doing it (doing “good”) is not the *honor* of our Maker, we use not our powers in a subservience to the great end for which they were given us by God...A regard to his glory ought to influence us in the whole course of our behavior, as a determining principle.” Edwards, quoting Brine, Misc. 1357, *WJE* 23, 605.

¹⁰³ Edwards, Misc. 1218, *WJE* 23, 151.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid: “There is no such thing,” reasons Edwards. “God sees no more by making creatures that they might be happy. He hath in his Son an adequate object for all the desires of this kind that are in his heart. And in his infinite happiness he sees as much happiness as can be.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

Thus, Edwards states, the original “disposition in the heart of God” might be reasonably called “goodness,” i.e. the “desire” to “communicate happiness” to “new beings,” as long as it is understood that the “sum” of universal happiness does not increase. Nevertheless, rather than tangle with this complexity, Edwards is adequately prepared to draw upon his previous teleological work to define glory in terms of goodness and happiness, and call the “name” of this disposition, “God’s glory.”¹⁰⁶

Therefore, again, rather than shifting away from defining God’s ultimate end in terms of goodness and happiness, Edwards confirms that, while he has *named* the original ultimate end “God’s glory” according to its traditional and especially, biblical, nomenclature, he has, nevertheless, *defined* it in terms of goodness and the communication of happiness, as he continues:

Indeed God, in making the creature happy, seems as it were to express or exhibit himself *ad extra* two ways: not only does one of his perfections exercise itself in it, viz. his goodness; but there is something of God actually communicated, some of that good that is in God, that the creature hereby has communion in, viz. God’s happiness. The creature partakes of the happiness of God, at least an image of it. And we must therefore conceive that there is a disposition in God, not only to exercise his attributes and perfections in this, but also to communicate his divine good.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ “But ’tis properly referred to another perfection, of which it is one sort of exercise, viz. the disposition that is in the infinite fountain of good, and of glory and excellency, to shine forth or to flow out, which shining forth or flowing out of God’s infinite fullness is called God’s glory in Scripture.” Edwards, Misc. 1218, *WJE* 23, 152.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. Charnock articulates something remarkably similar, writing that God makes the world “for himself” *this way*: “by the *manifestation* of himself and the riches of his nature,” but this is “not to make himself blessed, but to *discover his own blessedness to his creatures, and to communicate something of it to them.*” Charnock, *Existence and Attributes of God*, Vol. II, 229. Conceiving of the *ad extra* glory of God as including the communication of “something of God,” even God’s own happiness, as Edwards and Charnock propose, would have not been uncontroversial in Reformed circles. Muller writes that the *ad intra* glory of God, which in its “formal” sense is God’s own “knowledge, love, and delight in himself,” is “*incommunicable to creatures.*” Muller, *PRRD*3, 547-48. Yet, note, in the case of Edwards, that he includes the caveat, “*at least an image of it,*” when stating, “the creature partakes of the happiness of God,” thereby protecting the Creator-creature distinction.

Thus, while Edwards admits the *name*, “God’s glory,” based on his extensive work to define God’s glory in terms of the communication of happiness, Edwards is able to preserve happiness as ultimate *telos*, as he describes God’s glory above: “God, in making the creature happy” expresses and exhibits himself by the “exercise” of his goodness and the “communication” of “God’s happiness.” Edwards, as I have already mentioned, utilises his doctrine of the Trinity to describe the communication of “God’s happiness,” which “is called God’s glory,” as consisting of the communication of both God’s “understanding or idea,” i.e. the “knowledge of God” and his “will, consisting in love and joy, which may be summed up in the love and enjoyment of God.”¹⁰⁸ Thus, again, Edwards’s previous work on the Trinity enables Edwards to define the glory of God *ad extra* in terms of “happiness.” Furthermore, Edwards unifies the exercise and communication of God’s goodness, i.e. God’s glory, in such a way as to emphasize the ultimate status of the “communication,” as he writes, they “may be reduced to one (end): viz. God’s exerting himself *in order to the effect*,”¹⁰⁹ that is, God exercises his goodness “in order to” communicate his knowledge, love and joy, which is his happiness.

Lastly, as we have already discussed, this framework also allows Edwards to describe “making the creature happy” by the communication of God’s happiness as God communicating “himself,” i.e. his knowledge, love, and joy, which is his happiness. This protects the creature’s happiness from subordination relative to God and his glory, as the creature’s happiness is a partaking of God and his happiness, i.e. his glory. Having laid the foundation for this framework in the *Discourse* and the related notebook entries that describe the agreement of the *ad intra* and *ad extra* operations of God, especially Misc. 448, Edwards writes, “that which proceeds from God *ad extra* is agreeable to the twofold subsistences which proceed from him *ad intra*, which is the Son and the Holy Spirit,” which is the Triune God “exerting himself and communicating

¹⁰⁸ Edwards, Misc. 1218, *WJE* 23, 152-53.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 153.

himself.”¹¹⁰ Edwards is, therefore, able to describe the communication of God’s happiness and “making the creature happy” as one end “called God’s glory,” whereby God “makes himself his end,” as he is “himself communicated.”¹¹¹

Misc. 1218 summarises decades of Edwards’s work to articulate God’s glory in terms of “making the creature happy,” much of which will translate directly into *End of Creation*. In the Reformed tradition, the ultimate end of creation must be represented by God’s glory, which “name” Edwards employs, however, Edwards develops a way to comprehend both the glorious *ad intra* life of God and his glory *ad extra* in terms of God’s goodness and the communication of his happiness.

5.4.2 *The Glory of God is a Communication of Happiness*

In 1754, the same year that he takes up his pen to write *End of Creation*, Edwards records historical support from the writings of Puritan Thomas Goodwin for the notion that God’s glory is “not only a manifestation of his excellency, but a communication of his happiness,” which is further evidence of Edwards’s agenda to demonstrate happiness as ultimate *telos* within the Reformed context. Edwards records a series of quotations from Goodwin’s *Exposition of Ephesians* in Misc. 1275, entitled, “That Glory of God that is the End of God’s Works is not only [a] Manifestation of His Excellency but [a] Communication of His Happiness.”¹¹² This seldom analysed notebook entry reveals that Edwards stands with Goodwin against the myopic view of God’s ‘manifest’ glory as ultimate *telos*, which Edwards perceives to exist within his Reformed tradition. The glory of God *ad extra* is not merely the manifestation or exhibition of God’s excellency, according to Edwards, it is also a communication of happiness to the creature, which the Goodwin text supports. Goodwin argues, as Edwards, that the *ad extra* glory of God is *both* manifestation *and* the communication of

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Edwards, Misc. 1275, *WJE* 23, 222.

happiness, which appears to encourage Edwards as he prepares to write *End of Creation*. The “chief and original end” of salvation, writes Goodwin, is not merely the “manifestation of his own glory,” but God’s “kindness” in order to communicate goodness “to some that should be made happy by it.”¹¹³ God manifests his glory, writes Goodwin, in such a way that communicates his goodness and grace:

“The chief and utmost thing” that God desireth “is the manifestation of the riches of his grace, it argues [...], that his end of manifesting himself, was not wholly for himself, but to communicate unto others: why? Because grace is wholly communicative; there can be no other interpretation of ‘showing riches of grace,’ but to do good to others.”¹¹⁴

The glory of God’s grace, argues Goodwin, is inherently communicative of goodness, and happiness. The “chief thing God would exalt” is “a communication” of “blessedness,” writes Goodwin.¹¹⁵ If God’s “supreme end had been the manifestation of his power and wisdom...he could have shown his power and wisdom upon them, as he hath done upon men he hath cast into hell, and yet communicated no blessedness to them.”¹¹⁶ Therefore, God aims at a manifestation of his glory that is a communication of grace, goodness, and happiness to the creature, which view Edwards’s shares. Like Edwards, Goodwin explains this doctrine of God’s glory on the basis of God’s goodness and happiness:

Our all-wise and infinitely blessed Lord who had from everlasting riches of glorious perfections [...], which though he himself knew and was infinitely blessed in the knowledge of them, though no saint or angel had ever been, or ever knew them, yet all these his glorious perfections being crowned with goodness, hath made him willing to make known what riches of glory were in him unto some creatures which yet were in Christ, his goodness moved him to it, for *bonum est sui communicativum*, and it is the nature of perfection also to be *manifestativum sui*, and that not because any perfection is added to it

¹¹³ Thomas Goodwin, quoted by Edwards, Misc. 1275, *WJE* 23, 222.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 223.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

when made known, [...] but that they might perfect others: this set him upon some ways to make known his riches, and his glory, to some that should be made happy by it...¹¹⁷

Goodwin states that God, while infinitely and eternally happy, is nevertheless moved by his goodness, “to make known what riches of glory were in him unto some creatures,” because goodness is by its nature communicative, and perfection is inclined toward manifestation. Thus, God makes his glory known, “to some that should be made happy by it,” which is, from the perspective of redemption, nearly identical to Edwards’s view.

Paul Ramsey, however, claims that Edwards’s agreement with Goodwin “would represent a retrogression.”¹¹⁸ For Ramsey, Goodwin’s comment, “his goodness moved him to it,” is the crux of the matter. Edwards, having defined the glory of God in terms of happiness, has indeed settled on naming God’s original motivation “the glory of God,” rather than the goodness of God, *however*, what Ramsey misses is that Goodwin is referring to the goodness and happiness and grace *of salvation*, which work takes place subsequent to God’s creation of the world and is, according to Edwards, motivated by goodness, as he writes in Misc. 702, and in *End of Creation*:

The work of redemption wrought out by Jesus Christ, is spoken of in such a manner as being from the grace and love of God to men, that does not well consist with his seeking a communication of good to them only subordinately, i.e. not at all from any inclination to their good directly, or delight in giving happiness to them.¹¹⁹

According to Edwards, the work of redemption *is* motivated by the goodness of God. As Goodwin is speaking of the motive of God to save existing creatures, and to perfect them and make them happy, rather than God’s original motive to create them, he does not contradict Edwards, who shares this same view. Thus, Edwards, even as he is beginning to write *End of Creation* in 1754, has in

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ramsey, *WJE* 8, 519, n5.

¹¹⁹ Edwards, *End of Creation*, *WJE* 8, 504.

mind the defense of happiness and particularly the notion that God's glory must be comprehended as inclusive of the communication of God's goodness and happiness to the creature.

Upon the completion of Misc. 1275, Edwards shifts his literary efforts on the topic of the end of creation away from his *Miscellanies* notebook and toward preparing the text of his mature teleological statement, *End of Creation*.¹²⁰ Therefore, over the course of Edwards's entire career, right up until the time of writing *End of Creation*, Edwards can be observed defending happiness as ultimate *telos* from a Reformed teleological perspective, which is the primary agenda and purpose of his "end of creation" project.

5.4.3 Biblical Evidence for the Happiness of God's Glory

The sixth section of the second chapter of *End of Creation* also demonstrates Edwards's longstanding strategy to comprehend the glory of God in terms of happiness, as Edwards's biblical definition of the glory of God is articulated uniquely in terms of happiness. Edwards first establishes the traditional distinctions of God's "internal" and "external" glory. Internal glory signifies "what is within, inherent or in possession of the subject, it very commonly signifies excellency, or great valuableness, dignity, or worthiness of regard." After two very brief mentions of internal glory as "a great and excellent good," Edwards develops a lengthy biblical defense of the notion that internal glory is "often put for a great height of happiness and prosperity and fullness of

¹²⁰ Edwards had completed his draft of *End of Creation* and read it aloud to Bellamy and Hopkins by February of 1755. Kenneth P. Minkema, "Jonathan Edwards: A Theological Life," in *The Princeton Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, 13. Sweeney indicates that Misc. 1277b was written "no earlier than March 1754" and Misc. 1281, "no earlier than 1756," therefore, the absence of entries *after* Misc. 1274 and 1275 on the topic of the end of creation until Misc. 1355a, written probably two years later according to Sweeney's timeline, when Edwards revisits his *End of Creation* draft in early 1757 (according to Marsden), indicates that Misc. 1274 and 1275 are the final notebook entries on this topic before he writes *End of Creation*. Sweeney, "Editor's Introduction," *WJE* 23, 5; Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 459.

good in general.”¹²¹ Edwards defines the “inherent,” or “possession” of internal glory as “a great height of happiness,” offering 1 Pet. 4:13 as support: “But rejoice inasmuch as ye are made partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy,” as well as 1 Pet. 1:8, “Ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.” Relatedly, Edwards calls internal glory a “fullness of good,” which of course Edwards associates with happiness.¹²²

While Edwards has certainly become convinced by the biblical data, he has also inherited the notion of the happiness of God’s *ad intra* glory from the Reformed tradition. Leigh’s portrayal of the “formal” internal glory of God’s “own knowledge, love, and delight in himself”¹²³ closely resembles Edwards’s Trinitarian theological impulse, and recall that te Velde observes that many Reformed, including Maastricht, believe that “God’s glory has the aspect of happiness or beatitude.”¹²⁴ Edwards’s language of “possession” of glory is also indicative of Edwards’s happiness agenda, as the term “possession” is commonly found in Reformed discussions of God’s happiness, rather than God’s glory. Polanus writes, “The blessedness of God (*beatitudo Dei*) embraces...the possession of all goods.”¹²⁵ Edwards’s interpretation of the biblical data on “the glory of God” defined as happiness therefore, reveals the influence of the Reformed tradition, which Edwards has applied over the course of his entire career for the sake of his Reformed teleology of happiness, as with *Discourse*

¹²¹ Ibid, 514-15. Edwards describes 10 Scriptures to substantiate these first two traditional concepts, but he provides 21 for the concept of “glory” as “a great height of happiness and prosperity and fullness of good in general.”

¹²² The term “fullness,” which Edwards uses extensively in *End of Creation*, is particularly associated with discussions of happiness, or blessedness, in the Reformed doctrine of God. Leigh defines God’s blessedness is “that Attribute whereby God hath all *fulness of delight and contentment in himself*, and needeth nothing out of himself to make him happy,” and relatedly comments, “He liveth a most perfect life, abounds with all perfect virtues, sets them at work himself *in all fulness of perfection, and in all this enjoys himself with inconceivable satisfaction*.” Leigh, quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 382-83 (emphasis added).

¹²³ Muller, *PRRD3*, 547.

¹²⁴ te Velde, *Paths Beyond Tracing Out*, 205.

¹²⁵ Polanus, quoted by Muller, *PRRD3*, 382.

on the Trinity, which defines the *ad intra* glory of the Trinity in terms of happiness.

Edwards's description of the "external" glory of God also reveals his happiness agenda. Edwards initially describes the biblical portrayal of the "external" glory of God as "the exhibition, emanation or communication of the internal glory,"¹²⁶ however, his elaborations integrate his extensive work from the 1730s on the happiness of redemption to make the case that the *ad extra* glory should be understood in terms of the communication of goodness and happiness to the creature through the work of redemption. As Edwards observes, "the word is very often thus used when applied to God and Christ,"¹²⁷ whereby glory "sometimes evidently signifies the communications of God's fullness, and means much the same thing with God's abundant and exceeding goodness and grace."¹²⁸ Edwards once again cites Exodus 33 on the association of God's goodness with God's glory: "So when Moses says, "I

¹²⁶ Edwards, *End of Creation*, WJE 8, 515. Ramsay argues that the term "emanation," which Edwards begins to utilize later in his career is "but another expression for the manifestation, exhibition, disclosure, or communication of the internal glory of a thing (inherent or "in possession")." Ramsey, WJE 8, 515, n. 9. Strobel is more precise: "I take Edwards's emanation language to simply draw the link between who God is *ad intra* with who he is *ad extra*. In other words, emanation serves to link the processions with the missions." Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology*, 97, n83. Indeed, in *End of Creation*, Edwards writes, "As there is an infinite fullness of all possible good in God, a fullness of every perfection, of all excellency and beauty, and of infinite happiness. And as this fullness is capable of *communication or emanation ad extra*; so it seems a thing amiable and valuable in itself that it should be communicated or flow forth.... There should, therefore, exist...such things as the knowledge of God's glory in other beings, and an high esteem of it, love to it, and delight and complacency in it: this appears I say in another way, viz. *as these things are but the emanations of God's own knowledge, holiness and joy.*" Edwards, *End of Creation*, WJE 8, 432-33 (emphasis added). While the Reformed tradition generally shuns the term "emanation," as its Neoplatonist associations might imply the breakdown of the Creator-creature distinction or 'necessary' creation as te Velde says, Edwards's use of the term does not necessarily imply a lack of orthodoxy, as Crisp demonstrates is compellingly argued by Robert C. Whittemore. Crisp, *Edwards on God and Creation*, 156, te Velde, *Paths Beyond Tracing*, 205, n. 12. For Whittemore's defense of Edwards's orthodox Neoplatonism, see Robert C. Whittemore, "Jonathan Edwards and the Theology of the Sixth Way," *Church History* 35.1 (1966): 60-75.

¹²⁷ Edwards, *End of Creation*, WJE 8, 516.

¹²⁸ Ibid, 518.

beseech thee show me thy glory”; God granting his request, makes answer, “I will make all my goodness to pass before thee,” Ex. 33:18-19.”¹²⁹

Edwards argues explicitly for God’s external glory as the happiness of God’s people with biblical texts related to Christ and the gospel: “What we find in John 12:23-32 is worthy of particular notice...The words and behavior of Christ, which we have an account of here, argue two things”:

- (1) That the happiness and salvation of men was an end that Christ ultimately aimed at in the labors and sufferings he went through, for our redemption (and consequently, by what has been before observed, an ultimate end of the work of creation).
- (2) The glory of God, and the emanations and fruits of his grace in man’s salvation, as so spoken of by Christ on this occasion in just the same manner, that it would be quite unnatural to understand him as speaking of two distinct things.¹³⁰

Edwards’s point is that what is “observable concerning the salvation of men,” is that Christ aimed at “the happiness and salvation of men” just as he sought “the glory of God,” and they are therefore, not “two distinct things.” According to Edwards, the biblical account of the work of redemption through Christ demonstrates that the external glory of God *is* the “happiness and salvation of men” which is the “ultimate” aim of Christ in the work of redemption and therefore, the “ultimate end of the work of creation,” as he notes. Edwards furthermore observes that Christ himself teaches this doctrine of the happiness of God’s external glory:

He first speaks of his own glory and the glory of his Father, as the great end that should be obtained by what he is about to suffer; and then explains and amplifies what he says on this, in what he expresses of the salvation of men that shall be obtained by it...*By this behavior, and these speeches of our Redeemer, it appears that the expressions of divine grace, in the sanctification and happiness of the redeemed, are especially that glory of his, and his Father, which was the joy set before him...*¹³¹

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid, 519.

¹³¹ Ibid, 520-21 (emphasis added).

According to Edwards's interpretation of John 12, the "glory" of the Father and the Son are "the expressions of divine grace, in the sanctification and happiness of the redeemed." Thus, the happiness of God's redeemed and sanctified people represents God's *ad extra* glory. Lastly, Edwards uses John 12 to define the external glory of God in terms of happiness based on "God's glory being so often represented by" a "communication" or "fountain of" light:

What can be thought of, that so naturally and aptly represents the emanation of the internal glory of God; or the flowing forth, and abundant communication of that infinite fullness of good that is in God? *Light is very often in Scripture put for comfort, joy, happiness, and for good in general.*¹³²

Light is an analogy for God's external glory, according to Edwards, which "is very often...put for comfort, joy, happiness and for good in general." Edwards's footnote is a reference to Isaiah 6:3, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory," which he interprets is "consisting especially in his holiness, is that sight or communications of which man's fullness, i.e. his holiness and happiness, consists."¹³³ Therefore, Edwards's extensive discussion in *End of Creation* of the biblical support for the notion that God's internal and external glory should be comprehended in terms of happiness demonstrates strong continuity with Edwards's original and enduring agenda to make happiness ultimate *telos* in the Reformed teleological vision.

5.5 The Happiness of the *End of Creation*

The summary statement of Edwards's most mature teleological declaration, *End of Creation*,¹³⁴ represents the culmination of Edwards's career long pursuit of a Reformed teleology of happiness. While the intellectual context and internal development of Edwards's "end of creation" project are central to

¹³² Ibid (emphasis added).

¹³³ Ibid, 521, n. 3.

¹³⁴ "Section VII. Showing that the Ultimate End of the Creation is but One, and what that One End is." Edwards, *End of Creation*, WJE 8, 526.

our thesis about Edwards's enduring purpose to defend happiness as ultimate *telos* from a Reformed perspective, the capstone of Edwards's teleological project, *End of Creation*, must be examined. In what follows, I will demonstrate the continuity of this text with Edwards's longstanding agenda to defend happiness as ultimate *telos*, as well as briefly consider the scholarly interpretations of *End of Creation*, which tend to overlook Edwards's purpose to defend happiness. As I have already discussed, most commentators read *End of Creation* as a defense and promotion of the "glory of God" in response to a radically humanistic Enlightenment, yet alternative interpretations exist. I will address each of these views for the sake of highlighting the contribution this thesis makes to the current scholarship.

5.5.1 Interpretations of *End of Creation*

George Marsden has called Edwards's *End of Creation* "a sort of prolegomena to all his work," and the "logical starting point for all his thinking."¹³⁵ Nevertheless, the essay, which was published posthumously in 1765 in tandem with *The Nature of True Virtue* as the *Two Dissertations*, has received relatively little scholarly attention,¹³⁶ and no commentator has examined the text, or its development, from the perspective of happiness. The current literature tends to accentuate one of three primary aspects of this important work: ethics, philosophy, or theology. Scholars have argued that the purpose and significance of *End of Creation* is the way that Edwards: 1.) Establishes a

¹³⁵ Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 460.

¹³⁶ McClymond and McDermott observe: "Scholars have lavished praise on Edwards's *End of Creation*. . . . Yet, strangely, *End of Creation* has not attracted much interest in the secondary literature on Edwards." McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 208-9. Focused treatments of *End of Creation* include: McClymond, *Encounters with God*; McClymond and McDermott, *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards*; Holmes, *God of Grace and God of Glory*; Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology*; Walter J. Schultz, "Jonathan Edwards' *End of Creation* and Spinoza's *Conundrum*," "Jonathan Edwards' Argument That God's End In Creation Must Manifest His Supreme Self-Regard," *Jonathan Edwards Studies*, 81-103, Vol. 4, no. 1 (2014), "Jonathan Edwards' Philosophical Argument Concerning God's End in Creation," *Jonathan Edwards Studies*, Vol. 4, no. 3 (2014): 297-326.

foundation for ethics, 2.) Provides an answer to a philosophical conundrum, i.e. *why* God created the world, or, 3.) Defends a theocentric vision of reality in response to Enlightenment intellectual trends, especially by defending a supremely high view God's sovereignty and glory. An examination of these three views will not only serve to highlight the contribution of my thesis, but it will also help explain why the theme of happiness and related aspects of the Reformed and Enlightenment contexts have been overlooked.

First, the purpose and significance of *End of Creation* is frequently characterised as primarily ethical, due largely to Ramsey's influential commentary. For Ramsey, the *Two Dissertations* are intimately related. *End of Creation* and *The Nature of True Virtue* are one work: "The one is the mirror image of the other; the "end" for which God created the world must be the "end" of a truly virtuous and holy life."¹³⁷ Analysing *End of Creation* for the sake of interpreting *The Nature of True Virtue* and Edwards's ethical thought is certainly reasonable, however, Ramsey makes *The Nature of True Virtue* the interpretive key of *End of Creation*, and as a result, the purpose and message of *End of Creation* is characterised as ethical, or moral:

The reader has the two dissertations before him in the sequence in which Edwards intended them to be understood – plus the prospect of beginning with Edwards' first and major account of a truly virtuous and holy life, for which objective moral end God created the world.¹³⁸

For Ramsey, *End of Creation* establishes a framework for morality, namely "true virtue," which Edwards writes in *The Nature of True Virtue*, "must chiefly consist in love to God; the Being of beings, infinitely the greatest and best of beings."¹³⁹ Therefore, Ramsey claims that the overarching teleological message of *End of Creation* is that God created the world most ultimately for that "objective moral end," love to God.

¹³⁷ Ramsey, "Editor's Introduction," *WJE* 8, 5.

¹³⁸ *Ibid*, 7.

¹³⁹ Edwards, *The Nature of True Virtue*, *WJE* 8, 550.

McClymond and McDermott follow Ramsey in interpreting *End of Creation* as an ethical text:

The creation of the world, surprisingly, was an ethical issue. It was a matter of right and wrong choice – in this case God’s choice. Within Edwards’s corpus, the most important text on ethics was the posthumously published *Two Dissertations* (1765), comprising *End of Creation* and *True Virtue*. Taken side by side, these two treatises argued that the love of God was the necessary context for all truly moral actions, and that morality found its proper and sole fulfillment in authentic religion. *True Virtue* approached the issue of moral choice from the standpoint of human beings, who must choose God as their supreme end if their actions are to be truly moral. *End of Creation* approached the issue of moral choice from the standpoint of God himself, who had to make himself his own supreme end in choosing and acting so that his own choices and actions might be truly moral – in sync, one might say, with the nature of reality.¹⁴⁰

These scholars declare that *End of Creation* is an essentially ethical treatise, establishing an ethics of God as a foundation for human ethics. As a perfectly moral being, God is motivated by love for himself and makes himself his own “end” (*End of Creation*), therefore, human beings should also be motivated by love for God (*The Nature of True Virtue*). Thus, Ramsey, McClymond, and McDermott frame their readings of *End of Creation* particularly around ethics and highlight divine love as the organizing theme of Edwards’s purpose and message, arguing that the significance of *End of Creation* is the establishment of an ethical framework aimed at explaining human virtue and moral action.

Second, *End of Creation* is often characterised as a philosophical endeavor, meaning it is perceived to be motivated and shaped by a desire to answer a philosophical query, namely: ‘Why did God create the world?’ or ‘What is the end God sought in creating the world?’ As Strobel puts it, Edwards’s “perspective is...a typical (albeit robust) Reformed answer to the question of why God created: God in his eternal fullness, willed to create for his own glory.”¹⁴¹ In other words, the purpose and achievement of *End of Creation* is

¹⁴⁰ McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 208.

¹⁴¹ Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards’s Theology*, 77.

interpreted by many as the provision of a biblical, yet reasonable and philosophical answer to the question of God's original motive and purpose in creating the world.

While my view does not deny the existence of this question (Edwards does, of course, provide an answer to this query), this reading misinterprets Edwards's starting point. That is, what the philosophical perspective assumes is that Edwards's "end of creation" project originates from a neutral and objective stance. It is imagined that young Edwards begins to reason and search the Scriptures regarding God's "end of creation" with little more in mind than the question, 'Why did God create the world?' Ben Stevens's *Why God Created the World: A Jonathan Edwards Adaptation*, written in collaboration with Edwards scholar Douglas Sweeney, is an example of this popular interpretation:

In his original remarks Edwards did not give a long explanation of his motives for writing. He simply dove headlong into this most important of all questions. I find a certain genius in that.¹⁴²

Edwards is characterised as a genius, motivated by philosophical enquiry *per se*. It is supposed that the brilliant young thinker Edwards sought to answer the perennially difficult question that had perplexed philosophers and theologians alike for thousands of years, 'Why did God create the world?' or 'Why does the world exist?' McClymond and McDermott are also paradigmatic in this regard, when they describe the first step of Edwards's development as a fascination with "the 'ultimate 'why' question":

Scholars speak of the "ultimate 'why' question," that is, the question as to why anything should exist at all. Ludwig Wittgenstein exclaimed, "How marvelous it is that anything should exist at all." Aristotle wrote that philosophy begins at wonder. Edwards too shared in metaphysical amazement at the sheer fact of existence.¹⁴³

¹⁴² Ben Stevens, *Why God Created the World: A Jonathan Edwards Adaptation* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2014), xv.

¹⁴³ McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 207.

These authors claim, therefore, that the genesis of *End of Creation* is Edwards's wonder and "metaphysical amazement" as to why the world exists. It is the ultimate metaphysical question, "the issue of being," that motivates Edwards's "end of creation" project, according to these authors.¹⁴⁴ Holmes describes Edwards's starting point similarly, albeit from the theological perspective, asking why *God* created the world:

Why, asks Edwards, with the orthodox before him, did God create the world?...Edwards' question is...why God should do anything at all: He is entirely sufficient in Himself, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, perfect in His own Triune life, so what purpose is served for Him in bringing into being the legions of angels, the expanses of the universe, and the sinful race of human beings?¹⁴⁵

Schultz's scholarship also examines *End of Creation* and its development from this philosophical perspective. His article, "Jonathan Edwards' End of Creation and Spinoza's Conundrum," examines *End of Creation* as a response to Spinoza's critique of orthodox teleology, reconciling God's purpose for creation with divine perfection, self-sufficiency and freedom.¹⁴⁶ Similarly, Anri Morimoto assumes that Edwards's motivation to write *End of Creation* is the question of why a self-sufficient God would create the world:

Why did God create the world? God in his eternal blissfulness is in need of nothing. The aseity of God means that he is what he is by himself and that there is no internal necessity or external constraint to move him towards the act of creation. What then is the significance of creation to God? This was the leading question that occupied Edwards' mind when he wrote his celebrated dissertation "The End for Which God Created the World."¹⁴⁷

My point regarding these philosophical interpretations is not that they are irrelevant. Edwards is certainly not ignorant of the why question of creation, which at times factors into his discussion. However, there is little evidence to

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 208.

¹⁴⁵ Holmes, *God of Grace and God of Glory*, 32-33.

¹⁴⁶ See Schultz, "Jonathan Edwards' End of Creation and Spinoza's Conundrum."

¹⁴⁷ Morimoto, "The End for Which God Created Jonathan Edwards," 33.

suggest that “this was the leading question that occupied Edwards’ mind” when he wrote *End of Creation*. This is important because the reading that makes this claim naturally fails to grapple with Edwards’s early convictions and enduring agenda regarding happiness as ultimate *telos*.

However, there is a well-known letter that Edwards wrote in February of 1757 to his literary agent, Thomas Foxcroft, which would seem to indicate that Edwards wrote *End of Creation* primarily in order to clarify central tenets of orthodox *theology*:

I have also written two other discourses, one on *God’s End in Creating the World*; the other concerning *The Nature of True Virtue*. As it appeared to me, the modern opinions which prevail concerning these two things, stand very much as foundations of that fashionable scheme of divinity, which seems to have become almost universal. My discourse on virtue is principally designed against that notion of virtue maintained by My Lord Shaftesbury, [Francis] Hutcheson, and [George] Turnbull; which seems to be most in vogue at this day, so far as I can perceive; which notion is calculated to show that all mankind are naturally disposed to virtue, and are without any native depravity.¹⁴⁸

It would appear from this statement that by his *Two Dissertations*, Edwards desires to combat “that fashionable scheme of divinity,” specifically the “modern opinions that prevail concerning” the “end of creation” and “true virtue.” At issue, therefore, is *divinity*, or theology, yet it is not clear what “modern opinions” Edwards is referring to with respect to the “end of creation.” Edwards exposes his opponents and the issue at stake with respect to moral theology, however, the opposing teleological views on “God’s End in Creating the World” remain a mystery. Nevertheless, as Minkema has argued, *End of Creation* does represent a polemical response to Enlightenment divinity.¹⁴⁹ Thus, more than providing an answer to a philosophical conundrum, *End of Creation* is polemical and responds to “fashionable” theological views.

¹⁴⁸ Edwards, “Letter to Thomas Foxcroft,” *WJE* 16, 696.

¹⁴⁹ “Most of all, they (the Stockbridge Treatises) are polemical in nature. Each treatise is aimed at a particular person or persons who represented a certain mode of thought to which Edwards objected.” Minkema, “Jonathan Edwards: A Theological Life,” 14.

Samuel Hopkins's preface to the *Two Dissertations* also supports reading *End of Creation* as a theological polemic, rather than philosophical query:

The subjects here handled are sublime and important. The end which God had in view in creating the world was doubtless worthy of him, and consequently the most excellent and glorious possible. This must be worthy to be known by all the intelligent creation, as excellent in itself, and worthy of their pursuit. And as true virtue distinguishes the inhabitants of heaven, and all the happy candidates for that world of glory, from all others; there cannot surely be a more interesting subject. The notions some men entertain concerning God's end in creating the world, and concerning true virtue, in our late author's opinion, have a natural tendency to corrupt Christianity, and to destroy the gospel of our redeemer.¹⁵⁰

From Hopkins perspective, the purpose of *End of Creation* is the protection of "the gospel" and orthodox "Christianity," which implies a theological motivation and agenda. More than a brilliant answer to a perennially difficult philosophical query, the views articulated in *End of Creation* are necessary to the survival of the gospel and Christian orthodoxy. Thus, according to Hopkins, *End of Creation* is at its core a theological polemic aimed at defending traditional orthodoxy. However, once again, missing are the specific details about the rival teleological views "some men entertain concerning God's end in creating the world."

As I have already discussed, the leading claim by the scholarship is that *End of Creation* responds to the Enlightenment view that God's end in creation is purely anthropocentric, thus disregarding God's interest, sovereignty, and glory. Notwithstanding an appreciation for Edwards's achievement to equate, or unify, the glory of God and human happiness,¹⁵¹ the consensus portrayal of the primary purpose of *End of Creation* is Edwards's defense of the glory of God in the face of an anthropocentric Enlightenment. As McClymond claims, *End of Creation* "is chiefly devoted to showing that the world exists for the glory of

¹⁵⁰ Samuel Hopkins, "Preface," *End of Creation*, *WJE* 8, 402.

¹⁵¹ Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 460-65; McClymond and McDermott, *Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, 207-223; Lee, "Editor's Introduction," *WJE* 21, 103.

God.”¹⁵² Marsden likewise writes, “The heart of Edwards’ exposition was his analysis of the many Scriptural references that the highest end of creation is “the glory of God.”¹⁵³ According to this interpretation, Edwards’s motivation is characterised as a theological defense of God’s glory against the encroachment of a radically humanistic interpretation of cosmic purpose and teleology that counts human happiness and the common good as ultimate. Naturally, the influence of this interpretation has tended to inhibit an appreciation for Edward’s agenda to defend *happiness* as ultimate *telos*, as is made clear by Holifield’s assessment: “The ultimate end of creation was not human happiness, but the diffusion of God’s “excellent fullness” for its own sake.”¹⁵⁴

Therefore, interpretations of *End of Creation* have tended to present Edwards as an ethicist primarily concerned to establish a Christian moral framework, or a philosopher searching for the answer to a perennially difficult question about God and creation, or a Calvinist theologian defending a high view of God and his glory. While I do not entirely disagree with these aspects of Edwards’s *End of Creation*, I would suggest that there is an important perspective on the purpose and significance of *End of Creation* that has been largely ignored, perhaps overshadowed by the aforementioned perspectives.

My thesis suggests that Edwards’s initial and enduring purpose for the “end of creation” project that culminates with *End of Creation* is the defense of happiness as ultimate *telos* against the rival teleological visions of Enlightenment moral thought and Reformed theology, which tend to devalue or subordinate happiness relative to practical virtue, godliness, or God’s glory. By analysing the “end of creation” project in its entirety, the development of thirty-five years of Edwards’s thought, my study suggests that Edwards’s starting point is neither neutral nor unbiased, nor are his efforts revealed as primarily aimed at answering the ‘why’ question of creation *per se*, nor a defense of the glory of

¹⁵² McClymond, *Encounters with God*, 29.

¹⁵³ Ibid, 462.

¹⁵⁴ Holifield, “Edwards as Theologian,” 149.

God, nor an orthodox view of moral philosophy. Rather, Edwards begins and sustains his “end of creation” project with a definite thesis - about happiness - that spiritual happiness is ultimate *telos*, in no way subordinate to the glory of God. The Enlightenment exaltation of practical human virtue over the beatific enjoyment of God, of knowing, loving, and delighting in God, and the subordination of spiritual happiness in the Reformed teleological scheme, motivate and inspire Edwards to prove and defend a Reformed teleology of happiness. Indeed, Edwards’s entire career bears witness to his effort to explore and establish this thesis, and *End of Creation* is no exception.

5.5.2 *The Happiness for Which God Created the World*

The summary teleological statement that concludes *End of Creation*, “Showing that the Ultimate End of the Creation of the World is But One, and what that One End is,” includes the following introductory comments that are of special interest, as they are often misinterpreted:

FROM what has been observed in the last section, it appears that however the last end of the creation is spoken of in Scripture under various denominations; yet if the whole of what is said relating to this affair be duly weighed, and one part compared with another, we shall have reason to think that the design of the Spirit of God don't seem to be to represent God's ultimate end as manifold, but as one. For though it be signified by various names, yet they appear not to be names of different things, but various names involving each other in their meaning; either different names of the same thing, or names of several parts of one whole, or of the same whole viewed in various lights, or in its different respects and relations.

For it appears that all that is ever spoken of in the Scripture as an ultimate end of God's works is included in that one phrase, "the glory of God"; which is the name by which the last end of God's works is most commonly called in Scripture: and seems to be the name which most aptly signifies the thing.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁵ Edwards, *End of Creation*, WJE 8, 526.

These opening remarks have led most scholars to conclude that “the glory of God” represents the dominant theme of *End of Creation* and the crucial doctrine motivating Edwards’s teleological project, as with Noll:

Against the exaltation of human happiness as the central concern of life, he argued in the first dissertation (*End of Creation*), “All that is ever spoken of in the Scripture as an ultimate end of God’s works is included in that one phrase, ‘the glory of God.’”¹⁵⁶

It is certainly understandable that Edwards’s comments might be interpreted this way, however, I will suggest that identifying this statement as Edwards’s primary purpose and central thesis is misguided. Edwards’s comments indicate two things, neither of which necessarily implies his comprehensive purpose or agenda. First, these comments represent a summative deduction from the previous section, as Edwards opens: “From what has been observed in the last section, it appears that” God’s ultimate end is “one.” The “last section,” recall, provides biblical definitions of the internal and external glory of God, including the abundance of support for the happiness of “the glory of God,” as previously discussed. Therefore, these comments have as much to do with happiness as they do the divine glory. Second, while Edwards’s concluding statement emphasises “the glory of God,” it does so, not in order to argue that the Scriptures support the idea that God’s last end is theocentric *per se*, but rather, as Edwards says, in order to argue that the Scriptures support the idea that the “last end of God’s works” is “*but one*.” Thus, Edwards’s argument is primarily *numerical*.

Furthermore, it is crucial to see that Edwards presents the phrase, “the glory of God,” as he had earlier in the *Miscellanies* notebook, as a “name,” a “name” that “the last end of God’s works is most commonly *called* in Scripture...*which most aptly signifies the thing*.” Therefore, according to Edwards, “the glory of God” is a biblical “name” that “signifies” something else. The glory of God is a “name” that *signifies*, rather than *defines*, “what that one

¹⁵⁶ Noll, *America’s God*, 24.

end is.” “The glory of God” is not the thing, not the meaning, or content, but rather, the biblical “name” capable of representing the one thing. Thus, the name, “the glory of God,” in this context is functional and instrumental. It is the biblical *name* representing God’s one end.

Lastly, the ultimate purpose and achievement of *End of Creation* is not merely declaring the ultimate end of creation as “one” and providing a biblical “name” for that one end, i.e. “the glory of God.” Rather, as the title of this section indicates, it is also, “showing...*what that one end is*,” that is, the “thing” ‘signified’ by the name “the glory of God,” which the entire context and development of Edwards’s “end of creation” project demonstrates to be *the communication of God’s happiness to the creature*. Indeed, Edwards’s purpose and agenda to establish God’s communication of happiness to the creature as the “thing” signified by the name, “the glory of God,” is progressively revealed throughout this summary statement of *End of Creation*.

Edwards initially describes “the thing signified by that name,” the glory of God, in the most general terms, but Edwards’s final section of *End of Creation* gradually reveals his longstanding agenda to articulate God’s glory and ultimate end in terms of happiness for the sake of defending a Reformed teleology of happiness. Edwards begins:

The thing signified by that name, "the glory of God," when spoken of as the supreme and ultimate end of the work of creation, and of all God's works, is the emanation and true external expression of God's internal glory and fullness; meaning by his fullness, what has already been explained.¹⁵⁷

Thus, the “thing signified by that name, “the glory of God”” is described by Edwards as “the emanation and true external expression of God’s internal glory and fullness.” “Emanation,” as I have noted, is a term used by Edwards to describe the external *communication* of God’s *internal* glory, which Edwards has spent decades working to define in terms of happiness. As I have shown, a

¹⁵⁷ Edwards, *End of Creation*, WJE 8, 527.

multitude of *Miscellanies* entries, *Discourse on the Trinity*, and even the immediately preceding section of *End of Creation* define God's *internal* glory in terms of happiness.

Regarding Edwards's use of the term "fullness," i.e. "God's internal glory and *fullness*;" meaning by *fullness*, *what has already been explained*," it will be observed that the second section of the first chapter of *End of Creation* specifically integrates "happiness" into the definition of God's "fullness," which notion appears particularly associated with the goodness of God and "communication or emanation ad extra":

As there is an infinite fullness of all possible good in God, a fullness of every perfection, of all excellency and beauty, and of infinite happiness. And this fullness is capable of communication or emanation ad extra.¹⁵⁸

In fact, earlier in *End of Creation*, Edwards describes the "infinite fullness of all possible good" from the communicative Trinitarian perspective that highlights happiness that he develops during the 1720s and early 1730s for the sake of defending his Reformed teleology of happiness. Edwards writes that since "the fullness of good that is in the fountain is in itself excellent and worthy to exist":

...Thus, it is fit, since there is an infinite fountain of light and knowledge, that this light should shine forth beams of communicated knowledge and understanding; and as there is an infinite fountain of holiness, moral excellence and beauty, so it should flow out in communicated holiness. And that as there is an infinite fullness of joy and happiness, so these should have an emanation, and become a fountain flowing out in abundant streams, as beams from the sun.¹⁵⁹

This Trinitarian framework not only demonstrates continuity with Edwards's earlier work on the happiness of the Trinity, but it exposes a unique and particular emphasis on happiness. Edwards's describes God's knowledge and holiness, each as an "infinite fountain," however, he describes God's "joy and happiness" as an "infinite *fullness*." Likewise, while Edwards writes that it is "fit"

¹⁵⁸ Ibid, 432-33.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, 433.

that knowledge and holiness should be “communicated,” it is “fit” that joy and happiness “should have an *emanation*,” which term particularly indicates “the link between who God is *ad intra* with who he is *ad extra*.”¹⁶⁰ Therefore, only God’s “joy and happiness” is capable of representing God’s “infinite fullness,” and only “joy and happiness” is “fit” to represent the “emanation” of God, which indicates the uniquely summative status of happiness, as God’s happiness consists of God’s knowledge, love, and joy, as Misc. 94 and the *Discourse on the Trinity* describe for the sake of Edwards teleology of happiness.

As I have demonstrated, according to Edwards, the *ad intra* happiness of the Triune God is that which grounds and defines God’s *ad extra* communication, or emanation, of happiness. This Trinitarian framework for Edwards’s teleology of happiness continues to surface in this important summary section of *End of Creation*, as Edwards’s subsequently explains the Trinitarian communication of the happiness of God. “The whole of God’s internal good or glory, is in these three things, viz. his infinite knowledge; his infinite virtue or holiness, and his infinite joy and happiness.” And therefore, “in these things, viz. in knowing God’s excellency, loving God for it, and rejoicing in it...are clearly implied in that glory of God, which consists in the emanation of his internal glory.”¹⁶¹ Thus, Edwards’s doctrine of the happiness of the *ad intra* Trinity allows Edwards to define the *ad extra* emanation of God’s “internal glory” in terms of the beatific enjoyment, or happiness of the knowledge, love, and joy of God.

Edwards’s purpose to explain happiness as ultimate *telos* becomes increasingly clear after this Trinitarian framework is established. In fact, a remarkable transition occurs, whereby Edwards’s emphasis on happiness is explicitly revealed:

Thus, ‘tis easy to conceive how God should seek the good of the creature, consisting in the creature’s knowledge and holiness, *and even*

¹⁶⁰ Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards’s Theology*, 97, n83.

¹⁶¹ Edwards, *End of Creation*, WJE 8, 528-29.

his happiness, from a supreme regard to himself; *as his happiness arises from that which is an image and participation of God's own beauty*; and consists in the creature's exercising a supreme regard to God and complacency in him; in beholding God's glory, in esteeming it and loving it, and rejoicing in it, and in his exercising and testifying love and supreme respect to God: which is the same thing with the creature's exalting God as his chief good, and making him his supreme end.¹⁶²

Edwards defends his teleological conviction that "God should seek the good of the creature, consisting in...*even his happiness*," based on his view that the creature's "*happiness arises from that which is an image and participation of God's own beauty*," which according to Edwards, particularly demonstrates "supreme regard to God" as the "chief good" and "supreme end." Thus, the spiritual happiness of the creature participating in the life and beauty of God is the same thing as God himself exalted as *summum bonum* and supreme end. Decades of development have come to this: Edwards is able to articulate God as chief good and supreme end *in terms of the creature's happiness*. The beatific enjoyment of God, or the spiritual happiness of knowing, loving, and rejoicing in God is precisely that which glorifies God; indeed, it *is* the glory of God *ad extra*, i.e. the emanation, or communication of the happiness of the internal glory of God.

Edwards's emphasis on happiness only heightens as he moves toward his conclusion. Edwards offers yet another reason why "'tis easy to conceive how God should seek the good of the creature, consisting in the creature's knowledge and holiness, *and even his happiness*":

And though the emanation of God's fullness which God intended in the creation, and which actually is the consequence of it, is to the creature as its object, and the creature is the subject of the fullness communicated, and is the creature's good; and was also regarded as such, when God sought it as the end of his works: yet it don't necessarily follow, that even in so doing, he did not make himself his end. It comes to the same thing.

¹⁶² Ibid, 533 (emphasis added).

God's respect to the creature's good, and his respect to himself, is not a divided respect; but both are united in one, *as the happiness of the creature aimed at is happiness in union with himself. The creature is no further happy with this happiness which God makes his ultimate end than he becomes one with God.*¹⁶³

Edwards reasons that God makes *himself* his end, by communicating *happiness* to the creature; and this is due to the fact that the "happiness of the creature aimed at is happiness in union with himself." God "aimed at" the happiness of the creature, and reasonably so, because the happiness of the creature is *happiness in God, united to God, a participation of God's own happiness*. By aiming at "the happiness of the creature," God "makes himself his end, as "the creature is no further happy with this happiness which God makes his ultimate end than he becomes one with God." Thus, Edwards's Reformed teleology of happiness is justified. Spiritual happiness in union with God, which is a participation of God's happiness, preserves to the utmost, the regard and respect of God and the notion that God is his own end.

Edwards's concluding arguments are thus, increasingly and intensely focused on *happiness*, rather than "the glory of God," which is due to the fact that *End of Creation* represents the culmination of Edwards's career long endeavor to defend his Reformed teleology of happiness. Certainly, as the beginning of this section bears witness, Edwards does not abandon his high view of the glory of God, rather, Edwards defines his high view of the glory of God *in terms of happiness* for the sake of defending happiness as ultimate telos within a Reformed theological framework.

Edwards does not relent from this heightened focus on happiness as he approaches his conclusion, as he explains his teleological stance from the perspective of eternity:

The more happiness the greater the union: when the happiness is perfect, the union is perfect. And as the happiness will be increasing to eternity, the union will become more and more strict and perfect; nearer

¹⁶³ Ibid (emphasis added).

and more like to that between God the Father and the Son; who are so united, that their interest is perfectly one.

If the happiness of the creature be considered as it will be, in the whole of the creature's eternal duration, with all the infinity of its progress, and infinite increase of nearness and union to God in an infinite strictness; in this view, the creature must be looked upon as united to God in an infinite strictness.¹⁶⁴

Edwards particularly supports his teleology of happiness from the perspective of the eternal duration and infinite progress of *the happiness of the creature in union with God*, as it becomes “nearer and more like that between God the Father and the Son; who are so united, that their interest is perfectly one.” Since, according to Edwards, greater and more perfect happiness means greater and more perfect union with God, Edwards's teleology of happiness is demonstrated to be perfectly inclusive of God's interest, as Edwards's Reformed tradition requires.

While Edwards has *named* the ultimate end of creation, the “glory of God,” he has *defined it as consisting of the creature's happiness in union with God*, which view is, not surprisingly, bolstered by Edwards's redemptive historical perspective:

If by reason of the strictness of the union of a man and his family, their interest may be looked upon as one, how much more one is the interest of Christ and his church...if they be considered with regard to their eternal and increasing union!¹⁶⁵

The work of redemption, which purchases and provides the creature's happy union with Christ, is, as we have emphasised throughout this thesis, essential to Edwards's biblical and Reformed teleology of happiness. It is upon this concluding reflection that Edwards states, “'Tis certain that what God aimed at in the creation of the world was the good that would be the consequence of the creation, in the whole continuance of the thing created,” which “good” is, as he has described, *the creature's happiness in union with God*.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid, 533-34 (emphasis added).

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, 535.

Edwards's final remarks consist of his response to a theoretical objection, which once again reveals his agenda to defend his teleology of happiness:

'Tis no solid objection against God's aiming at an infinitely perfect union of the creature with himself, that the particular time will never come when it can be said, the union is now infinitely perfect...I suppose it will not be denied by any that God, *in glorifying the saints in heaven with eternal felicity*, aims to satisfy his infinite grace or benevolence, by the bestowment of a good infinitely valuable, because eternal: and yet there never will come the moment, when it can be said, that now this infinitely valuable good has been actually bestowed.¹⁶⁶

The fact that God aims at something that will never, at a "particular time," be considered "infinitely perfect," argues Edwards, is no reason to reject his teleology of the creature's "eternal felicity" in union with God. In these final lines of *End of Creation*, Edwards describes God's ultimate end of creation almost exclusively in terms of goodness and happiness for the creature, including "perfect union" with God, "glorifying the saints in heaven with eternal felicity," the satisfaction of God's "infinite grace and benevolence," and the "bestowment of a good infinitely valuable." Thus, the ultimate agenda and dominant purpose of *End of Creation* is the same as that of the career long development of Edwards's "end of creation" project, the defense of happiness as ultimate *telos* from a Reformed theological perspective. More than declare the "glory of God" as the ultimate *telos*, *End of Creation* defines the *ad extra* glory of God, for the sake of Edwards's Reformed teleology of happiness, in terms of "the happiness of the creature aimed at...this happiness which God makes his ultimate end."

5.6 Conclusion

The development of Edwards's doctrine of the divine glory demonstrates Edwards's intense effort to establish his teleology of happiness within a Reformed theological framework. From the very beginning of his career, Edwards applies theological creativity for the sake of defining the divine glory

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, 536 (emphasis added).

and related doctrines in terms of happiness in order to defend his Reformed teleology of happiness. These efforts to articulate and shape the glory of God in terms of happiness for the sake of his teleology take place over the course of Edwards's entire career, primarily in his *Miscellanies* notebook, *Discourse on the Trinity*, and *End of Creation*. Underappreciated aspects of both the internal and external contexts, particularly surrounding Edwards's *Discourse on the Trinity* and the Reformed tradition, compliment my textual analysis to establish the plausibility that Edwards is motivated to defend happiness as ultimate *telos*. I have suggested that Edwards is aware of and responding to the dominant tendency of influential Reformed theologians to subordinate human happiness relative to God's glory in the teleological scheme. Thus, Edwards's efforts to define the *ad intra* and *ad extra* glory of God in terms of happiness appear to indicate that the primary and enduring agenda of Edwards's "end of creation" project is the defense of the teleological status of happiness, rather than God's glory.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study has been to expose a perspective on Jonathan Edwards's "end of creation" project that has been largely overlooked. A close examination of the internal development and the Early Modern intellectual context of Edwards's thought reveal that spiritual happiness is of central importance to Edwards's teleological vision. Scholars commonly assume that the burden of Edwards's teleological writings is a theocentric defense and promotion of the glory of God in the face of an increasingly anthropocentric Enlightenment. However, this study demonstrates that, notwithstanding Edwards's loyal adherence to the Reformed tradition's high view of God's glory, the early and enduring concern of Edwards's teleological project is the defense of spiritual happiness as ultimate *telos* from a Reformed perspective.

While Edwards's teleological conviction regarding happiness is inspired by his own Puritan and Reformed heritage and his profound early experience of spiritual happiness, Edwards pursues the proof and defense of his Reformed teleology of happiness in response to the tendency of both Reformed and non-Calvinist Enlightenment thinkers to subordinate the teleological status of happiness. During the Early Modern period, Reformed theologians subordinate happiness relative to godliness, and especially the glory of God, and Enlightenment thinkers increasingly make practical virtue and usefulness toward the common good the ultimate *telos* of human existence at the expense of spiritual happiness, which intellectual trends Edwards engages for the sake of defending his Reformed teleology of happiness.

After his conversion and subsequent profound experiences of spiritual happiness, Edwards, during the early 1720s, seeks to prove spiritual happiness as ultimate *telos* against these rival teleological schemes in his private notebooks, primarily on the basis of his doctrine of the divine goodness. During the next stage of development, Edwards works to defend happiness as ultimate *telos* from a particularly biblical and Reformed perspective. Drawing creatively from the resources of his own Reformed tradition, Edwards spends the rest of

his career developing his doctrines of God and the Trinity, the work of redemption, and the glory of God for the sake of defending his Reformed teleology of happiness, largely in response to the tendency of the Reformed tradition to subordinate happiness relative to the glory of God in the teleological scheme.

Therefore, the degree to which Edwards's teleology of happiness motivates and shapes his theology, and various theological projects, is worthy of further consideration. While this thesis makes its direct contribution to the interpretation of Edwards's teleological vision, it might also serve as a catalyst for additional investigations into Edwards's theology, and perhaps theological method, for the sake of grappling with the influence of Edwards's teleological agenda. It is commonly assumed that Edwards's theology, as Strobel puts it, "begins with God."¹ However, while Edwards's theology may *conceptually* 'begin' with God, who is indeed "the Alpha and the Omega" of Edwards's universe and theological system, it would appear that on the basis of this study, Edwards's theology *developmentally* 'begins' with happiness. That is, Edwards's early teleological conviction, "*happiness* is the end of the creation," appears to significantly influence and shape the subsequent development of several theological doctrines established for the sake of bolstering Edwards's Reformed teleology of happiness. Edwards's doctrine of the glory of God, his doctrine of the Spirit, his doctrine of redemption and elements of his soteriology, and especially his doctrine of the Trinity, each bear the marks of this developmental influence.

This need not imply that happiness as ultimate *telos* represents a controlling *a priori* concept that universally and comprehensively defines Edwards's theology in such a way that overwhelms his commitment to traditional biblical hermeneutics and Reformed theology. However, what might be suggested on the basis of this study is that over the course of his career, Edwards mines both the Scriptures and the Reformed tradition in order to gather

¹ Strobel, *Jonathan Edwards's Theology*, 4.

together and creatively develop existing traditional doctrines for the sake of establishing a theological framework for his Reformed teleology of happiness, which necessarily influences and shapes his theology.

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